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Creation date : 20-05-2021
Chinese counter-sanctions on EU targets
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 19-05-2021
Author: Matthew PARRY
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Summary: On 22 March 2021, the People's Republic of China (PRC) announced sanctions on 10 individuals and 4 entities in the EU, including Members of the European Parliament and of the Council's Political and Security Committee, that it said 'severely harm China's sovereignty and interests and maliciously spread lies and disinformation'. It described the sanctions as a response to EU sanctions imposed the same day on a Chinese entity and individuals accused of human rights abuses in Xinjiang (PRC). The dispute comes at a sensitive time in EU-China relations, raising questions about approval of the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI), a proposed EU-China bilateral investment treaty.

At a Glance EN

Prospects for EU-Asia connectivity: The 'European way to connectivity'
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 06-04-2021
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus
Summary: Asia matters to Europe: home to the world’s largest population and fastest-growing economies, Asia is a major trade partner of the EU. Recognising this, the EU has promoted the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), established five strategic partnerships – including with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) – and negotiated or concluded free trade agreements with several Asian countries. In September 2018, the EU adopted a joint communication on ‘Connecting Europe and Asia – Building blocks for an EU strategy’. The strategy proposes that the EU engage with its Asian partners through a sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based approach to connectivity, exploiting existing and planned EU networks. It acknowledges the presence of a significant investment gap in connectivity and recognises the need to mobilise and strengthen cooperation with private investors, national and international institutions, and multilateral development banks. Analysts welcomed the strategy as the EU response to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This initiative has been raising concerns in the EU and in several participating countries, some of which are worried about possible ‘debt traps’. Echoing these concerns, the European Parliament has warned that the 17+1 format of cooperation between China and 17 central and eastern European countries could undermine the EU’s common position towards Beijing. In January 2021, MEPs called for the creation of a global EU connectivity strategy as an extension of the current EU-Asia connectivity strategy. In September 2019, the EU and Japan launched the EU-Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure. In December 2020, the EU and ASEAN issued a joint ministerial statement on connectivity. Financing Europe-Asia connectivity is a key challenge in the years to come, together with the challenges highlighted by the coronavirus crisis. This is a revised and updated edition of a briefing from October 2018.

Briefing EN

The Quad: An emerging multilateral security framework of democracies in the Indo-Pacific region
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 18-03-2021
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Summary: The Indo-Pacific region houses the largest share of global GDP, the world’s busiest trade routes, largest population and most powerful militaries. After having successfully worked side by side in coordinating the 2004 tsunami relief, in 2007 Australia, India, Japan and the US (the Quad, short for Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) held meetings with each other to discuss security-related issues, and their navies held a military exercise. Although the grouping ended its activities prematurely in 2008, China’s growing assertiveness in the region prompted it to remain active in bilateral and trilateral cooperation on security issues. Meetings among senior officials resumed in November 2017 in Manila. In November 2020, the Quad navies held a major military exercise. The first Quad summit took place in March 2021. The grouping has emphasised that its goal is to maintain the liberal rules-based international order, which China seeks to undermine through a revisionist challenge of the status quo. Its efforts are not focused on creating institutions or military alliances, but rather, on generating gradual convergence of cooperation on multiple issues, including Covid-19, climate change, critical and emerging technologies, counterterrorism, cybersecurity and disaster recovery. Establishing further cooperation with other like-minded countries in the region and co-existing with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) are among the Quad’s future challenges. The EU is not a traditional security player in the Indo-Pacific; however, as the region is particularly relevant to its trade, it has a strong interest in avoiding disruption of the sea lanes. The Indo-Pacific could be an area of cooperation with the new US administration. France, Germany and the Netherlands have published strategies or guidelines for the Indo-Pacific region, which has stepped up expectations about the forthcoming strategy for the region by the EU as a whole.

Briefing EN
International Agreements in Progress - EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment: Levelling the playing field with China

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 15-03-2021  
Author: Gisela GRIEGER  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs

Summary: Lack of reciprocity in access to the Chinese market and the absence of a level playing field for EU investors in China have posed major challenges for EU-China investment relations in recent years, with the negotiation of a comprehensive agreement on investment (CAI) being considered by the EU a key instrument to remedy this state of play. The CAI negotiations aimed at establishing a uniform legal framework for EU-China investment ties by replacing the 25 outdated bilateral investment treaties (BITs) China and EU Member States had concluded prior to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 when the EU gained competence for most investment issues. The CAI was intended to go far beyond traditional investment protection, also covering market access, investment-related sustainable development, and level playing field issues, such as transparency of subsidies, and rules on state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and forced technology transfer. On 30 December 2020, negotiators reached an agreement in principle which is now undergoing legal scrubbing and will subsequently be translated into all official EU languages – which may take up to one year – before it will be formally submitted to the Council for approval and to the European Parliament for consent. Second edition. The ‘International Agreements in Progress’ briefings are updated at key stages throughout the process, from initial discussions through to ratification. The previous edition was from September 2020.

Briefing  EN

CAN nature get it right? A study on rights of nature in the European context

Publication type: Study  
Date: 01-03-2021  
External author: Jan DARPO  
Policy area: Environment | Culture | Public international law | Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters | Global Governance | Agriculture and Rural Development | Tourism | EU Law: Legal System and Acts | Human Rights

Summary: This study, commissioned by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the JURI Committee, explores the concept of “Rights of Nature” (RoN) and its different aspects in legal philosophy and international agreements, as well as in legislation and case-law on different levels. The study delves on the ideas of rights of nature in comparison with rights to nature, legal personhood and standing in court for natural entities, and analyses ECtHR and CJEU case-law on access to justice in environmental decision-making. It emphasises, in particular, the need to strengthen the requirements for independent scientific evaluations in certain permit regimes under EU law. The study also highlights the crucial importance of promoting the role of civil society as watchdog over the implementation of EU environmental law by way of a wider access to justice via both the national courts and the CJEU, which is also in line with the political priorities for delivering the European Green Deal.

Study  EN

Support for democracy through EU external policy: New tools for growing challenges

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 26-02-2021  
Author: Ionel ZAMFIR  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs

Summary: The crisis of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism across the globe, compounded by the coronavirus pandemic, highlight the importance of taking a more strategic and autonomous approach to supporting democracy worldwide – an objective often balanced against other external policy aims until now. Since the start of the current parliamentary term, the EU has reviewed its political guidance on democracy and human rights. It has adopted or is about to adopt important measures to strengthen support for democracy (including better monitoring and enforcement of relevant provisions in trade arrangements). The adoption of the new multiannual financial framework (MFF) and of a new development aid instrument bringing together all former external aid instruments provides new opportunities for better implementing EU funding and better exploiting the EU’s leverage as a major provider of development aid. Digital challenges and the narrowing space for civil societies are among the priorities to be addressed. The challenge of engaging more difficult partners, such as China and Russia, has inspired calls to broaden the scope of a values-based foreign policy. The EU is seeking to build equal partnerships based on constructive and open dialogues, rather than use its economic and commercial traction in a coercive manner. This is an update of a Briefing from February 2018.

Briefing  EN
China tightens its grip over the South China Sea

Publication type  At a Glance
Date  24-02-2021
Author  Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area  Foreign Affairs
Keyword  national sovereignty | UN convention | Malaysia | Indonesia | Taiwan | territorial dispute | freedom of navigation | Brunei | Philippines | South China Sea question | China | Vietnam
Summary  Of all the disputed areas claimed by China, the South China Sea (SCS) has been the most prominent in recent years, since it involves the largest number of actors with overlapping claims to maritime features and waters, as well as non-claimant countries, owing to its strategic importance as one of the world’s busiest shipping lanes. In 2020, China stepped up its salami-slicing tactics to assert its sweeping ‘historic’ rights, while Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam dismissed them in an alignment of positions supported by a 2016 landmark arbitration award under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In 2020, the United States’ previous neutral position on China’s maritime claims shifted to dismissing them as unlawful. The EU remained attached to its position of not taking sides with either party’s claims. Some EU Member States have become more vocal in dismissing China’s “historic” rights and have increased their presence in the SCS. This publication is an update of a briefing published in 2016, PE 586.671.

Taiwan in 2020 and beyond

Publication type  At a Glance
Date  24-02-2021
Author  Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area  Foreign Affairs
Keyword  Hong Kong | United States | interference | economic policy | political propaganda | trade cooperation | Taiwan | democracy | international relations | presidential election | China
Summary  The Taiwanese went to the polls in early 2020 and overwhelmingly elected President Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) for a second term, while navigating pervasive disinformation and influence operations and closely watching events in Hong Kong. The Covid-19 pandemic was an opportunity for Taiwan to leverage its robust virus containment policy for global outreach. The self-ruled democratic island somewhat reduced its economic overreliance on mainland China through diversification and relocation strategies. Taiwan witnessed a spike in military incursions into its airspace and waters by mainland China’s air and naval forces. Key issues to watch are the impact of the strategic rivalry between the US and China on Taiwan’s economy and the future of US strategic ambiguity as a deterrent against a potential hostile invasion of the island. This is an update of the 2019 EPRS briefing Taiwan’s political survival in a challenging geopolitical context, PE 635.606.

Myanmar: The return of the junta

Publication type  At a Glance
Date  16-02-2021
Author  Martin RUSSELL
Policy area  Foreign Affairs
Keyword  EU restrictive measure | national election | Burma/Myanmar | electoral fraud | international sanctions | democracy | arms trade | armed forces | coup d’état | economic sanctions
Summary  On 1 February 2021, the Myanmar armed forces seized power and imprisoned Aung San Suu Kyi, de facto leader of the country since 2016. The coup threatens to derail Myanmar’s progress towards democracy, which began in 2008 after five decades of brutal military rule. Huge protests have broken out in Myanmar, calling for the restoration of the elected civilian government. The EU is considering additional sanctions against the country.
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: How lean, clean, and green is the AIIB?

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-02-2021
Author: Gisela GRIEGER

**Policy area:** Foreign Affairs

**Summary:**
In 2013, China proposed to establish the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as a new source of infrastructure financing in Asia. Like the China-led Belt and Road Initiative, the AIIB reflects the emergence of China's new, much more assertive foreign policy posture. The AIIB opened for business in 2016 shortly after the signature of the Paris Agreement. The pledge to be 'lean, clean and green'. Notably the United States (US) perceived the bank as a game-changer for established multilateral development banks (MDBs) and the global financial architecture. Despite pressure from the US, most of its allies – except Japan – joined the AIIB, arguing that shaping the bank's business model from the inside was a better option than criticising it from the outside. With over 100 members by the end of 2020, the AIIB has become the second largest MDB after the World Bank. The fact that the AIIB numbers advanced economies among its members has won legitimacy for China's new platform for economic diplomacy, boosting China's reputation as a proponent of (often selective) multilateralism. The bank's strategy of attracting Western donors as members with limited voting rights, of recruiting senior staff from other MDBs and of initially only co-financing projects with other MDBs, has earned it credibility, 'triple A' credit ratings and easy access to capital markets, prerequisites for rapid expansion into sectors such as digital infrastructure. However, the AIIB has been criticised for its innovative governance features, the flexibility embedded in its strategies, selective convergence of its standards with those of traditional MDBs and the gap between its green rhetoric and the failure to green its fossil fuel-dominated lending portfolio. The AIIB is set to adopt a revised environmental and social framework in April 2021. Integrating stringent green targets in line with its 2020 strategic target of giving climate financing a 50 % share of all project approvals by 2025 could align the AIIB with other MDBs and ease cooperation with European banks.

Briefing EN

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International Agreements in Progress - After Cotonou: Towards a new agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific states

**Publication type:** Briefing
**Date:** 20-01-2021
**Author:** Eric PICHON

**Policy area:** Development and Humanitarian Aid

**Summary:**
The Cotonou partnership agreement between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) states was due to expire in February 2020. The then ACP Group of States – which later became the Organisation of the ACP States (OACPS) – and the EU started negotiations for a 'post-Cotonou' agreement in September 2018. This time around, the main challenge for the EU is to maintain its cooperation with the three OACPS sub-regions and to continue to promote the values enshrined in the EU Treaties. At the same time, the new partnership should take into account the United Nations' sustainable development goals, the redefinition of the EU's strategies for the regions concerned, the ACP states' new ambitions and the changing balance of power at the global level. Both the EU and the OACPS have agreed on the principle of a common foundation complemented by three regional protocols. These multi-level negotiations, the coronavirus crisis and difficulties in reaching agreement on sensitive issues, such as migration management and sexual and reproductive health and rights, prevented the new agreement from being finalised by the initial expiry date set in the Cotonou Agreement. Thus, to avoid a legal vacuum in relations, the provisions of this agreement were extended until the end of 2021. After two years of negotiations, a political deal was reached in December 2020, including on the most complex issues. The European Parliament insisted on maintaining the ACP-EU joint parliamentary assembly and was successful in this endeavour, in addition, three regional parliamentary assemblies will be created in the future institutional set-up of the partnership.

Briefing EN

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The link between biodiversity loss and the increasing spread of zoonotic diseases

**Publication type:** In-Depth Analysis
**Date:** 22-12-2020

**External author:** Frank VAN LANGEVELDE, Hugo René RIVERA MENDOZA, Kevin D. MATSON, Helen J. ESSE, Willem F. DE BOER, Stefan SCHINDLER

**Policy area:** Environment | Internal Market and Customs Union | Public Health | Coronavirus

**Keyword:** biodiversity | protected area | zoonosis | wildlife | animal disease | infectious disease | disease prevention | health risk | ecosystem

**Summary:**
Over the last decades, a variety of fatal infectious diseases have had zoonotic origins. The linkages between hosts, vectors, parasites and pathogens can be influenced by a multitude of factors, such as biodiversity, wildlife and land use. High levels of biodiversity may be a potential source of pathogen transmission, but biodiversity loss can also promote transmission by increasing the number of competent hosts for a pathogen. Biodiversity conservation reduces the risk of zoonotic diseases when it provides additional habitats for species and reduces the potential contact between wildlife, livestock and humans. Additionally, host and vector management is a viable option. Other crucial measures include the restriction and sanitary control of wildlife trade, while considering the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Each case requires an assessment of the best way to reduce risk while considering implications for other ecosystem functions or services. This document was provided by the Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies at the request of the committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI).

In-Depth Analysis DE, EN
**Japan's Parliament and other political institutions**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 15-12-2020  
**Author** Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Summary** Japan is a constitutional monarchy, with a parliamentary system of government based on the separation of powers. The Emperor is the symbol of the state and does not hold political functions, only performing ceremonial duties. Nevertheless, he can play a relevant diplomatic role. With Emperor Naruhito's enshrinement in 2019, following his father's abdication, Japan has entered the Reiwa (beautiful harmony) age. The 2001 administrative reform strengthened the Prime Minister's leadership in the cabinet. The Chief Cabinet Secretary also plays a relevant role. Suga Yoshihide, leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party, is the country's Prime Minister, succeeding Abe Shinzō, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, in 2020. The Supreme Court is at the top of the judicial system. It is not a constitutional court, despite handling appeals arising from actual disputes. The appointment of its Justices is reviewed by the people at the first general election of the Lower House following their appointment. Japan is a unitary state divided into 47 prefectures. A Metropolitan Government administers the capital, Tokyo. Japan's 1947 Constitution recognises 'local self-government.' Local governments carry out many of the national policies and programmes. They have limited autonomy, also because of their dependence on financial resources from the central government. Japan has a bicameral parliament – the Diet. Although the two chambers share legislative powers, the Lower House (House of Representatives) prevails in the legislative process and is empowered to adopt the final decision on the budget and on the approval of international treaties. Changes in the regional geopolitical environment and in the country's demographic structure have prompted debates on issues such as the revision of the 'pacifist' Article 9 of the Constitution and the seat distribution among electoral constituencies. This is an update of a briefing published in June 2020.

**Briefing** EN

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**Japan's ageing society**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 15-12-2020  
**Author** Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** older worker | depopulation | population ageing | elderly person | Japan | life expectancy | robotisation | population policy | fertility | demographic analysis  
**Summary** Japan is aging fast. Its 'super-aged' society is the oldest in the world: 28.7 % of the population are 65 or older, with women forming the majority. The country is also home to a record 80,000 centenarians. By 2036, people aged 65 and over will represent a third of the population. Since 2011, the Japanese population has also been shrinking: it is a rare case of large country whose overall population is becoming smaller in prosperous and peaceful times. Japan's population is expected to drop from 127 million in 2015 to 88 million by 2065. Japan's demographic crisis is the consequence of two elements: a high life expectancy and a low fertility rate. In 2015, Japan had the second highest life expectancy in the world. Meanwhile, since the 1970s the country has failed to raise its fertility rate to the replacement level. The working culture, a deterioration of employment opportunities for young men and the traditional gender division of labour are possible explanations for this trend. The consequences of the country's aging and shrinking population include economic crisis, budgetary challenges, pressure on job markets and depopulation of rural areas. The silver economy is meanwhile flourishing and Japan is at the forefront of robot development to face a declining labour force and to take care of its elderly. The government's efforts to address the demographic crisis have yet to succeed however, and immigration has been limited. Tokyo is engaged in global health cooperation and succeeded in incorporating the concept of human security in the sustainable development goals. It has also been active in international cooperation on ageing, with a focus on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. The EU's own ageing society is not far behind Japan. It could benefit from learning from Japan's experience, and cooperating on all aspects relating to demographic challenges, including on 'agtech': technology making comfortable longevity accessible to all.

**Briefing** EN

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**Taxation of the digital economy: Latest developments**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 15-12-2020  
**Author** Miroslava Kostova KARABOYTCHEVA  
**Policy area** Economics and Monetary Issues  
**Keyword** digital single market | OECD | double taxation | big data | digital economy | tax law | digital economy taxation | digital technology | provision of services | tax harmonisation  
**Summary** There is an important ongoing debate on the direct and indirect taxation of the digital economy. Proposals on digital taxes, which are under negotiation in the OECD, are inter-linked with European Commission proposals on the same subject. As the Council did not reach an agreement on the Commission proposal for a digital services tax, national initiatives appeared in the interim until a global solution in the area of direct taxation could be found in the OECD. On 1 December 2020, the Council endorsed the text of amendments to the Directive on Administrative Cooperation between the Member States (known as DAC7), which will oblige digital platform operators to provide information on the operations they intermediate. If an agreement is not achieved at global level by July 2021, it could trigger an EU response in the form of a digital levy. There is also a debate on whether that levy should be similar to the Commission proposal that failed to get political backing or not.

**At a Glance** EN
China's economic recovery and dual circulation model

Publication type Briefing
Date 11-12-2020
Author Gisela GRIEGER

Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus

Keyword domestic trade | epidemic | economic recovery | domestic market | economic development | coronavirus disease | technological change | investment | China | new technology

Summary After a delayed response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in late 2019, China has expanded its sophisticated digital surveillance systems to the health sector, linking security and health. It has apparently successfully contained the virus, while most other countries still face an uphill battle with Covid-19. China emerged first from lockdown, and its economy rapidly entered a V-shaped recovery. As in 2008, China is driving the global recovery and will derive strategic gains from this role. However, China's relations with advanced economies and some emerging markets have further deteriorated during the pandemic, as its aggressive foreign policy posture has triggered pushback. This has created a more hostile environment for China's economic development and has had a negative impact on China's hitherto almost unconstrained access to these economies. The need to make the Chinese economy more resilient against external shocks and the intention to tap into the unexploited potential of China's huge domestic market in order to realise the nation's ambitions of becoming a global leader in cutting-edge technologies have prompted the Chinese leadership to launch a new economic development paradigm for China. The 'dual circulation development model' still lacks specifics but is expected to be a key theme in China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) to be officially approved in March 2021. The concept suggests that, in future, priority will be given to 'domestic circulation' over 'international circulation'. China's more inward-looking development strategy geared towards greater self-reliance in strategic sectors requires major domestic structural reform and investment to unleash the purchasing power of China's low-end consumers and the indigenous innovation efforts to achieve the technological breakthroughs needed. These innovation efforts are expected to be largely state-driven. For the EU the envisaged shifts create challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, competition with China will become fiercer and, on the other, the EU can pursue openings for supply chain diversification with like-minded countries and thus boost its open strategic autonomy.

Briefing EN

State of play of EU-Australia FTA talks

Publication type At a Glance
Date 02-12-2020
Author Krisztina BINDER

Policy area International Trade

Keyword negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Australia | free-trade agreement | international negotiations | tariff negotiations | trade agreement (EU) | international trade | small and medium-sized enterprises | market access

Summary In May 2018, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate a free trade agreement (FTA) with Australia. Negotiations were officially launched in June 2018. Between July 2018 and September 2020, eight negotiation rounds took place. The first chapter of the prospective EU-Australia FTA, concluded at the technical level, is on small and medium-sized enterprises. The ninth negotiation round started on 30 November 2020.

At a Glance EN

G20 Summit of November 2020: Great expectations despite boycott calls

Publication type Briefing
Date 19-11-2020
Author Ionel ZAMFIR

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus

Keyword Saudi Arabia | international cooperation | economic recovery | international sanctions | G20 | monetary crisis | economic cooperation | human rights movement | summit meeting | human rights

Summary On 21-22 November, under Saudi Arabia's presidency, the G20 will hold its first regular summit in a virtual format. Unavoidably the focus will be on the current crisis, more specifically on protecting lives and livelihoods and restoring growth. Given the crucial role it played in tackling the 2008-2009 financial crisis, hopes are high regarding the G20's potential role in proposing a financial and economic solution to deal with the ongoing downturn. Several major G20 members have invested massive amounts of money to keep their economies afloat, in line with the decision of the extraordinary G20 summit held in the spring, but the depth of the current crisis requires additional action. Some critics have argued that the G20 is not up to its perceived role. The lack of US leadership in particular has been seen as an obstacle preventing the group from living up to its full potential. One of the crucial measures adopted by the G20 has been to freeze the official debt payments of developing countries, with the measure recently being extended. Many voices consider that this will not be enough to avoid state defaults however. Saudi Arabia, the first Arab country to hold the presidency, has been eager to use the opportunity provided by its G20 presidency to showcase its ambitious internal reform programme and its economic potential. The Saudis' leadership of the G20 in these times of turmoil has not escaped criticism, first of all because of the perceived inconsistency between stated objectives at G20 level and internal reality in the country, but also because of the role the country played in the oil price crash of 2020. Given the dire human rights situation in Saudi Arabia and its fighting in Yemen, calls for a boycott of the summit have been multiplying. The European Parliament has suggested that the EU should downgrade its presence at the summit.
EU-India: Cooperation on climate

Publication type Briefing
Date 17-11-2020
Author Enrico D’AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword green economy | climate change | EU environmental policy | atmospheric pollution | domestic policy | greenhouse gas | India | renewable energy | reduction of gas emissions | environmental cooperation | town planning | summit meeting

Summary The EU and India are respectively the third and the fourth largest emitters of atmosphere-warming greenhouse gases. Meanwhile, India's per-capita emissions are much lower than those of other major economies. India is acutely affected by climate change and is strongly dependent on coal as a source of primary energy. Nevertheless, it is now a leader in the promotion of renewable energy and has fixed ambitious targets in terms of electricity-generation capacity from renewables. Along these lines, Delhi is a major promoter of the International Solar Alliance and, alongside other partners, the founder of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. The EU and India have assumed a leading role in fighting climate change and have been increasingly cooperating with each other in this field, at both public- and private-sector levels. They have agreed partnerships on sectoral issues such as clean energy, water and urban development. The EU is supporting several Indian projects on climate action, sustainability and clean energy. At their 15th summit, held in July 2020, the EU and India placed a strong focus on climate change and reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to engage constructively in its first global stocktaking in 2023.

State of play of EU–New Zealand FTA talks

Publication type At a Glance
Date 12-11-2020
Author Krisztina Binder
Policy area International Trade
Keyword common commercial policy | New Zealand | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | international cooperation | free-trade agreement | trade cooperation | trade agreement (EU) | international trade | international relations

Summary Negotiations on an EU free trade agreement (FTA) with New Zealand, one of the fastest-growing developed economies in the world, were launched in June 2018. Eight negotiating rounds took place between July 2018 and June 2020, resulting in the closure of the Transparency Chapter of the future FTA. The next round will be scheduled with the New Zealand government following the general elections held on 17 October 2020.

Trade negotiations between the EU and ASEAN member states

Publication type Briefing
Date 11-11-2020
Author Krisztina Binder
Policy area International Trade
Keyword free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | ASEAN countries | ASEAN

Summary In 2017, the European Union–Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) dialogue partnership celebrated its 40th anniversary. The same year saw the 50th anniversary of the founding of ASEAN. The ASEAN region is currently the world’s fifth largest economy, a dynamic economic area home to more than 660 million consumers. To ensure better access to opportunities in the region’s market, the European Union (EU) started negotiations with ASEAN for a region-to-region free trade agreement (FTA) in 2007. After negotiations were suspended in 2009, the EU decided to pursue bilateral trade agreements with the individual ASEAN member states. To date, six have begun talks on bilateral FTAs with the EU: Singapore and Malaysia in 2010; Vietnam in 2012; Thailand in 2013; the Philippines in 2015; and Indonesia in 2016. Negotiations have already been concluded and FTAs entered into force with two of these countries, Singapore and Vietnam, in November 2019 and August 2020, respectively. Negotiations are under way with Indonesia, while talks are currently on hold with Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. In the longer term, these bilateral FTAs would allow the establishment of a region-to-region FTA, which remains the EU's ultimate ambition. By bringing together two of the world’s largest economic areas, the agreement would establish a free trade area with a combined market of more than 1 billion people. It is in the EU’s interest to strengthen its economic cooperation with ASEAN, in order to maintain its competitive position in this dynamically developing region. Closer trade and investment relations could also pave the way towards the EU’s goal of a strategic partnership between the two regional blocs, encompassing political as well as economic cooperation.
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): The EU's partner in Asia?

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 11-11-2020
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: EU relations | free-trade agreement | ASEAN countries | ASEAN

Summary: Founded in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is often compared with the EU. Both organisations brought together former adversaries and successfully resolved tensions through cooperation, helping to bring peace and prosperity to their regions. However, the EU and ASEAN operate in very different ways. ASEAN is a strictly intergovernmental organisation in which decisions are based on consensus. While this approach has made it difficult for south-east Asian countries to achieve the same level of integration as the EU, it has also enabled ASEAN to accommodate huge disparities among its 10 member states. In 2003, south-east Asian leaders decided to take cooperation to another level by setting up an ASEAN Community. To this end, they adopted a charter in 2007, though without fundamentally changing the nature of the organisation's decision-making or giving it stronger institutions. The community has three pillars: political-security, economic, and socio-cultural. ASEAN's impact has been uneven. Barring the contentious South China Sea issue, ASEAN has become an effective platform for cooperation between its member states and the wider Asia-Pacific region, and promoted economic integration, even if the goal of an EU-style single market is a long way off. On the other hand, ASEAN is still perceived as an elite project that has little impact on the daily lives of south-east Asians. EU-ASEAN relations span four decades and have steadily deepened, building on common values as well as booming trade and investment. Both sides have expressed their ambition to upgrade to a strategic partnership.

Palm oil: Economic and environmental impacts

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 10-11-2020
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: Environment | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: economic consequence | biodiversity | sustainable agriculture | atmospheric pollution | greenhouse gas | environmental protection | vegetable oil | tropical forest | forest conservation | environmental impact

Summary: Economical and versatile, palm oil has become the world's most widely used vegetable oil. Although palm oil can be produced sustainably, rising consumption increases the risk of tropical rainforests being cut down to make way for plantations. Deforestation threatens biodiversity and causes greenhouse gas emissions. In view of this, the EU has revised its biofuels policy to phase out palm oil-based biodiesel by 2030.

Thailand: from coup to crisis

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 06-11-2020
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: constitutional monarchy | military regime | constitutional revision | political crisis | Thailand | cooperation agreement (EU) | coup d'état | human rights

Summary: Thailand is a constitutional monarchy with a history of political instability, alternating between military rule and unstable civilian governments. The latest in a long series of military coups was in 2014. In 2019, the junta handed over power to a nominally civilian government led by former army chief Prayuth Chan-ocha. Protestors are now demanding his resignation and constitutional reforms to end the military's control of Thai politics.

40 years of the Hague Convention on child abduction: legal and societal changes in the rights of a child

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 06-11-2020
External author: Adriana DE RUITER
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Public international law | Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters | Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | EU Law: Legal System and Acts | Human Rights
Keyword: police cooperation | illegal restraint | child protection | family policy | rights of access | children's rights

Summary: This in-depth analysis has been commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the JURI Committee in the context of the workshop to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. It looks into the implementation of the 1980 Convention, as regards the respect of autonomy of parts, validity of agreements and mediation, and describes, from a practitioner's point of view, how the parents and children see the process. The paper concludes that in order to protect the interest of the child, the 1980 Convention should be maintained with restricted exceptions, but more should be done in terms of prevention. The new measures should include, in particular, harmonisation of the relocation proceedings and principles, enforceability of mediation agreements, and increasing of the autonomy of the parties through the inclusion of residence and custody plans in prenuptial agreements.
EU–China Geographical Indications Agreement

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 05-11-2020

Author: Gisela GRIEGER

Policy area: International Trade

Keyword: foreign investment | trademark | import (EU) | export (EU) | investment abroad | designation of origin | industrial counterfeiting | agreement (EU) | China | proposal (EU)

Summary: During the November I part-session, Parliament is due to vote on giving its consent to the conclusion of the EU China agreement on cooperation on, and protection of, geographical indications (GIs), i.e. distinctive signs attached, mainly, to agri-food products that have a given quality, reputation or other characteristics that are attributable to their specific geographical origin. The agreement adds a new element to the legal framework for EU relations with China that is currently based, in particular, on the 1985 European Economic Community–China Trade and Cooperation Agreement. It seeks to protect 100 EU GIs and 100 Chinese GIs in each other’s territories against imitation and usurpation, and to bring the principle of reciprocity to bear in EU-China ties.

At a Glance: ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its implementation into EU Company law

Publication type: Study
Date: 05-11-2020

External authors: Kletia Noti; Prof. Federico Maria Mucciarelli; Dr Virginia dalla Pozza; Carlo Angelici Mattia PILLININI.

Policy area: International Trade | Contract Law, Commercial Law and Company Law | Human Rights

Keyword: company law | OECD | corporate social responsibility | research report | EP Committee | environmental protection | EU Member State | labour standard | supply chain | national implementing measure | human rights | International Labour Organisation

Summary: Building on both European Union (EU) law and chosen Member States’ legislation, this study, commissioned by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the JURI Committee aims at understanding to what extent Member States are supporting the development and the implementation of CSR strategies in the business community, with particular focus on due diligence requirements. It also attempts at providing some recommendations aimed at possibility developing a comprehensive and structured approach to CSR for the whole of the EU.

Study: EN

THE CHILD PERSPECTIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 1980 HAGUE CONVENTION

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 31-10-2020

External author: Marilyn FREEMAN

Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Public international law | Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters | Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | EU Law: Legal System and Acts | Human Rights

Keyword: social impact | epidemic | illegal restraint | cross-border dimension | child protection | coronavirus disease | international convention | legal hearing | children's rights

Summary: This in-depth analysis, commissioned by the Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Committee on Legal Affairs in the context of the Workshop to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, examines the way in which subject children feature within Convention proceedings. It considers the aims of the Convention, and the lack of supranational control of its application. It draws on empirical research relating to the effects and consequences of child abduction to discuss the opportunities for children and young people to participate within Convention proceedings, and highlights the international obligations for such participation within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and other regional instruments. Different jurisdictional approaches are explained, and the role of culture in this context is probed. The impact of COVID-19 on abducted children is also explored.

In-Depth Analysis: EN, PL

How can international trade contribute to sustainable forestry and the preservation of the world’s forests through the Green Deal?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 19-10-2020

External author: Werner RAZA, Bernhard TRÖSTER, Bernhard WOLFSLEHNER, Markus KRAJEWSKI.

Policy area: Environment | International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development

Keyword: biodiversity | deforestation | sustainable forest management | forest conservation | international trade

Summary: High deforestation rates, particularly in tropical areas, remain a pressing concern for the international community, given their impacts on the global climate and the loss of biodiversity. The EU has committed to promoting sustainable forest management both domestically and internationally. However, efforts so far have concentrated on promoting the legality of trade in timber and timber products, via policy instruments such as FLEGT and the EU Timber Regulation. EU trade policy could be employed more systematically to promote sustainable forestry and deforestation-free value chains. The report proposes eleven measures to this end, both at the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral level, that inter alia combine market access incentives on the part of consumer markets such as the EU with obligations to promote principles of sustainable production on the part of producer countries.

In-Depth Analysis: EN
EU-India: Trade prospects
Publication type At a Glance
Date 12-10-2020
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | generalised preferences | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | foreign capital | free-trade agreement | India | tariff agreement | trade agreement (EU) | international trade
Summary The EU-India Summit held in July 2020 agreed to establish a regular high-level dialogue at ministerial level on bilateral trade and investment relations. In this way, the EU and India expressed a clear political will to work together to overcome issues that have hampered their trade relations in recent years and impeded advances towards a bilateral trade and investment agreement – where negotiations have been stalled since 2013 – and achievement of the potential of economic relations between the world's two biggest democracies.

EU-India: Cooperation on digitalisation
Publication type At a Glance
Date 12-10-2020
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword digital single market | Internet | information security | transmission network | information technology | economic growth | India | technological change | cooperation agreement (EU) | new technology
Summary A 'human-centric digitalisation to develop inclusive economies and societies' is the main concept behind the digital transformation of both the EU and India. During their July 2020 summit, the two agreed to promote global digitalisation standards characterised by 'safe and ethical deployment'. Their flagship initiatives – the EU digital single market and 'Digital India' – make them natural partners in the promotion of these global standards. Yet, if their ICT cooperation is to make sound progress, some of Delhi's protectionist policies need further consideration.

International Agreements in Progress - After Cotonou: Towards a new agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific states
Publication type Briefing
Date 12-10-2020
Author Eric PICHON
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword ACP countries | ACP-EU relationship | international agreement | Cotonou Agreement
Summary The Cotonou partnership agreement between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) states is due to expire at the end of 2020. The then ACP Group of States – which later became the Organisation of the ACP States (OACPS) – and the EU adopted their negotiating mandates in May and June 2018 respectively, thus starting negotiations for a 'post-Cotonou' agreement in September 2018. The main challenge for the EU is to maintain its cooperation with the three OACPS sub-regions and to continue to promote the values enshrined in the EU Treaties. At the same time, the new partnership should take into account the United Nations' sustainable development goals, the redefinition of European strategies in the concerned regions, the new ambitions of the ACP states and the changing balance of power at the global level. Both the EU and the OACPS have agreed on the principle of a common foundation complemented by three regional protocols. These multi-level negotiations and the ongoing discussions on the next EU multiannual budget prevented the new agreement from being finalised by February 2020, the initial expiry date set in the Cotonou Agreement. Thus, in order to avoid a legal vacuum in relations, the provisions of the latter have been extended until the end of 2020. Negotiations are now in their final stages, however some complex issues remain to be solved, among which the institutional setting of the partnership, including the future of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Fifth edition. The 'International Agreements in Progress' briefings are updated at key stages throughout the process, from initial discussions through to ratification. To view earlier editions of this briefing (in French), please see the EPRS blog, https://epthinktank.eu/2018/07/09/le-futur-partenariat-de-lunion-europeenne-avec-les-pays-dafrique-des- caraibes-et-du-pacifique-international-agreements-in-progress/.
### WTO e-commerce negotiations

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 05-10-2020  
**Author** Jana TITIEVSKAIA

**Policy area** International Trade | Foreign Affairs

**Keyword** electronic commerce | World Trade Organisation | Internet | information security | cross-border dimension | international negotiations | digital contract | international trade | digital technology | trade agreement

**Summary**  
While e-commerce represents an increasing portion of the economy, international regulation of e-commerce is lagging behind. In 2017, the WTO Ministerial Conference issued a Joint Statement Initiative signalling the intention to launch plurilateral e-commerce talks. In January 2019, in the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos, 76 of 164 WTO members among them the EU, Australia, China, Japan, and the USA launched e-commerce negotiations. Members seek a high-standard outcome building on WTO agreements, but the legal form of the deal is not yet clear. Participants wish to modernise trade rules to fit the digital age and show that the WTO’s negotiating function can deliver. Key issues in the negotiations include e-contracts and e-signatures, data flows, data localisation requirements, disclosure of source code, and customs duties on electronic transmissions. While some divergences persist, in particular on data flows and privacy, the talks are progressing with a view to deliver a consolidated draft text by the end of 2020.

At a Glance [EN](#)

### Geopolitical implications of the COVID-19 pandemic

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 29-09-2020  
**External author** Florence GAUB, Lotje BOSWINKEL; EU ISS

**Policy area** Environment | Global Governance | Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Public Health | Coronavirus

**Keyword** social impact | economic consequence | epidemic | coronavirus disease

**Summary**  
Since the Coronavirus began its spread across the world, many analysts have speculated about its impact: would it merely accelerate previously-existing trends, or would it prove to be a geopolitical ‘game-changer’, creating a world profoundly different than before? The answer is much more complex than either or: the world during and after COVID-19 will have elements of both, the old and the new, the known and the unknown. This study explores both dimensions of the pandemic’s impact: how does it affect the geopolitical context it erupted into, and what possibility space does it open up? The first section assesses the geopolitical trends antedating the pandemic and measures its present and expected impact on them, while the second section lays out the space for action and change created by the disruption. In the third section, the interplay of trends and uncertainties is explored in three scenarios set in 2025: Strategic Distancing; Europe in Self-isolation; and Lockdown World. The study finds that European foreign policy is entering an era of re-definition in which the European Parliament should play a crucial role. This means outlining the elements of strategic autonomy, but also streamlining them with each other. As such, classical foreign policy needs to join forces with other policy areas such as environmental and technological matters, trade, strategic communication – and of course, health. In that sense alone, the pandemic is already proving to be a game-changer.

Study [EN](#)

### EU External Migration Policy and the Protection of Human Rights

**Publication type** In-Depth Analysis  
**Date** 28-09-2020  
**External author** Dr Violeta MORENO-LAX

**Policy area** Human Rights

**Keyword** Afghanistan | migration control | information analysis | Niger | EP Committee | EU migration policy | Turkey | rights of the individual | civil society | foreign national | agreement (EU) | human rights

**Summary**  
This in-depth analysis focuses on the human rights implications of EU external migration policy interventions: 1) identifying human rights obligations owed to third-country nationals when engaging in cooperation with third countries and non-EU actors; 2) assessing the means and level of compliance with these obligations when designing and implementing the main policy instruments; and 3) determining the existence and adequacy of operational, reporting, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms available in each case to track and respond to potential violations. Particular attention is paid to soft-law tools, on account of their enhanced potential to erode the enforceability of obligations, to downgrade democratic accountability and generally undermine the rule of law. Paving the way for the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, special emphasis is placed on cooperation under the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, the EU Agenda on Migration and the Migration Partnership Framework, including informal arrangements concluded by Frontex or by the Member States themselves. Four case studies guide the analysis and illustrate findings: (1) the EU-Turkey Statement; (2) the multi-modal cooperation with Libya; (3) the Joint Way Forward with Afghanistan; and (4) collaboration with Niger under the EUCAP Sahel mission. The in-depth analysis reveals that the full effect of the EU fundamental rights acquis in extra-territorial situations has not been duly accounted for and proposes a system to ensure compliance with the relevant standards covering the pre-conclusion, design, adoption, implementation, evaluation and review phases, highlighting the role of the European Parliament and civil society organisations.

In-Depth Analysis [EN](#)

Executive summary [DE, FR](#)
**EU-China geographical indications agreement**

On 6 November 2019, the EU and China concluded negotiations on a standalone agreement on cooperation on, and protection of, geographical indications (GIs), i.e. distinctive signs attached to (mainly) agricultural products that have a given quality, reputation or other characteristics that are attributable to their specific geographic origin. GIs are a type of intellectual property right (IPR) protected at multilateral level under the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and in the EU under a sui generis GI protection regime. The reciprocal EU-China agreement seeks to protect 100 EU GIs in China and 100 Chinese GIs in the EU against imitation and usurpation. On 20 July 2020, the Council endorsed its signature, and the European Parliament has now to give its consent for the agreement’s conclusion. Once in force, the agreement could help boost EU exports of high-quality foodstuffs, wines and spirits to the EU’s third-largest destination for agrifood exports, and foster rural development. It would also expand global recognition of the EU’s sui generis GI protection regime, a key EU trade policy objective.

**Forests in south-east Asia: Can they be saved?**

Nowhere in the world are forests shrinking faster than in south-east Asia. Rapid population growth and economic development put intense pressure on the environment. Between 1990 and 2020, an area larger than Germany was deforested, one half of it in Indonesia. Land clearing for agriculture is the main cause of deforestation. Driven by booming global demand, oil palm plantations have spread into formerly forested land, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia, which are the world’s largest producers. Logging, much of it illegal, is also a serious threat to the region’s forests. Deforestation destroys the habitats of iconic large mammals such as the orang-utan and tiger, as well as thousands of lesser-known, but still vital, animal and plant species; it also contributes to climate change. Smoke from fires on forested and cleared land causes economic disruption and thousands of premature deaths. Worrying though all this is, there are tentative signs of change. With international encouragement, south-east Asian governments are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of balanced development. Significant efforts are being made to protect forests and to make timber and palm oil production more sustainable. Perhaps reflecting such efforts, the pace of deforestation in most countries has come down slightly since a mid-2010s peak. However, it is too early to say whether this improvement can be sustained. The EU has played a leading role in helping south-east Asian countries to curb deforestation, for example by helping them to tackle illegal logging. It has also revised its biofuels policy to ensure that European demand for palm oil does not exacerbate the problem.
**State of play of existing instruments for combating impunity for international crimes**

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 14-08-2020  
**External author** Olympia BEKOU  
**Policy area** Human Rights  
**Keyword** Iraq | Venezuela | International Criminal Court | research report | Burma/Myanmar | International Criminal Tribunal | Syria | Rwanda | impunity | international criminal law | Colombia  
**Summary** The European Union and its Member States have been at the forefront of the fight against impunity for core international crimes, collectively providing political, technical and financial assistance to international, regional and domestic accountability efforts. Focusing on the current EU framework on accountability and six country situations (Rwanda, Colombia, Venezuela, Myanmar, Syria and Iraq), this study offers recommendations to guide future EU policy and the engagement of the European Parliament in the fight against impunity. The recommendations include enhancing the capacity, efficiency and coordination of EU institutions working on accountability, as well as encouraging comprehensive, impartial and inclusive approaches to country situations. EU action in bilateral and multilateral fora is also covered, with a view to enhancing the universal reach of accountability mechanisms and the protection of their integrity, encouraging cooperation and assistance, and to upholding the principle of complementarity.

**Korean peninsula: State of play - Further uncertainty follows period of hope**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 20-07-2020  
**Author** Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** North Korea | South Korea | policy analysis | international relations  
**Summary** North Korea and South Korea have been on different paths since World War II. The North has remained isolated and poor, its regime inspired by Soviet structures, with a centrally planned economy. The South, meanwhile, after alternating periods of autocratic and democratic rule, made a clear choice at the end of the 1980s in favour of democracy and a market economy, a choice that has led the country to success in several sectors. North and South Korea are still technically at war, as the military conflict of 1950-1953 ended with an armistice that was never followed by a peace treaty. There are 28 500 US (United States) soldiers stationed in South Korea, which signed a Mutual Defence Treaty with Washington in 1953. There have been frequent tensions over the past 70 years, and North Korea has become a de facto nuclear power since the 2000s, prompting international sanctions. Early in 2018 a detente raised hopes of peace. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un met with US President Donald Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, but the summits have led neither to the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, nor to the easing of sanctions against the North. Pyongyang's frustration provoked new tensions in the region in June 2020, when the North, in a symbolic move, destroyed the liaison office in the border area, the de facto embassy of the two Koreas. But Kim's options seem limited at present, and there is little chance of progress until after the US presidential elections. Meanwhile, Moon Jae-in has invested much political capital in the Korean peace process, and is willing to make further moves before the end of his mandate in 2022. The EU has traditionally maintained a policy of critical engagement towards North Korea, upholding the international non-proliferation regime and supporting a lasting reduction in tensions on the peninsula. The EU and South Korea are strategic partners. During the 30 June 2020 EU–South Korea summit, the EU reaffirmed its support for Seoul's efforts to engage with the North to achieve peace and prosperity on the peninsula.

**Scenarios for geo-politics after coronavirus: A recent Atlantic Council analysis**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 16-07-2020  
**Author** Leopold SCHMERTZING  
**Keyword** epidemic | United States | think tank | Russia | coronavirus disease | geopolitics | China  
**Summary** The Atlantic Council report, 'What World Post-Covid-19? Three Scenarios', has two main takeaways: first, Chinese-US rivalry could get worse and go global, destabilising an increasingly divided EU and endangering the United States' alliances system in Asia. Second, there is no way around the US, Europe and China cooperating to develop a positive, global 'new normal'.

Source: © European Union, 2021 - EP
EU development cooperation and ethical certification schemes: impact, transparency and traceability

Summary
‘Transparency’, ‘Traceability’, ‘Sustainable standards’, ‘good agricultural practices’ and ‘zero-deforestation’ are all fine terms which [alongside many others] have emerged in connection with the cocoa sector’s certification process. But does the reality of this process justify using such terms?

Our initial conclusions in this study, based on an analysis of existing research over recent years, revealed that a considerable number of investigations had been commissioned by the certification schemes themselves. Key findings presented by the various studies all conveyed a positive tone. However, on closer inspection we felt that smallholders covered by the programmes were ‘following party lines’ rather than speaking freely. This suspicion was well-founded. Having built up trust in the villages during several years of field-work, we eventually gained access to exclusive data held by the cooperatives and certification programmes. We have used this evidence in order to draw a comparison between the virtual world portrayed by certification schemes’ narrative and the real world being faced by cocoa producers. Certification schemes claim that they give a sense of trust within the value chain, particularly in regard to produce traceability. They also claim to assist farmers, by way of training, various inputs (fertilisers etc.) and credit schemes. In reality, these ‘advantages’ are not visible at farm level. Budgets prepared by cooperatives to justify the use of premiums reflect structural flaws in certification and access to information. Serious questions arise surrounding deforestation, child labour and the payment of premiums. Social investment is minimal and consumers’ perception diverges from the reality. In conclusion, we make a number of key proposals and suggestions based on stakeholders’ complaints and recommendations.

Climate Change and Migration

Summary
This study, commissioned by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the LIBE Committee, examines legal and policy responses to environmental migration and displacement. Following a review of international, regional and national initiatives and legal instruments, it offers recommendations on ways to better address root causes and consequences of the climate change-migration nexus in Europe and beyond.

Assessing the potential impact of an EU-India trade agreement

Summary
The EU and India are major actors in the international arena and the discussions over a possible Free Trade Agreement has been ongoing for several years. This study analyses the potential effects of an FTA between EU and India in a “Cost of Non Europe” perspective. The results of a quantitative simulation of a potential FTA in goods and services indicate that welfare gains from increased trade for both sides may be between € 8 billion and € 8.5 billion (0.03 % increase with respect to the baseline for the EU and about 0.3 % for India). Furthermore, a qualitative analysis suggests that potential gains may appear from a coordinated EU action in addressing possible side effects, distributive impacts and externalities (such as inequalities, labour market effects, poverty and development implications, environmental issues) and from increased coordination in the provision of global public goods. By considering these aspects, the Cost of Non-Europe in the field may be larger.
**Outcome of EU-China video-summit of 22 June 2020**

**Publication type**  At a Glance  
**Date**  30-06-2020  
**Author** Suzana Elena ANGHEL  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** climate change | disinformation | Hong Kong | information security | epidemic | videophone conference | coronavirus disease | international trade | summit meeting | China | human rights  
**Summary** On 22 June 2020, the EU and China held their 22nd summit by videoconference. It was the occasion for the EU and Chinese leadership to touch upon a wide range of dimensions of the both strategic and challenging bilateral relationship. Topics included trade, climate change, international peace and security, Hong Kong and human rights as well as the response to the coronavirus outbreak. Yet, no joint statement was adopted as further progress would require ‘reciprocity and trust’. China is for the EU both a partner committed to multilateralism, on which it nevertheless pursues in its own path, and a competitor, using assertively different economic and trade tools such as state subsidies or foreign direct investments to gain market share.

**Coronavirus in south-east Asia: Health, political and economic impact**

**Publication type**  Briefing  
**Date**  19-06-2020  
**Author** Martin RUSSELL  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus  
**Keyword** social impact | South-East Asia | economic consequence | epidemic | coronavirus disease  
**Summary** Coronavirus has affected the 10 south-east Asian countries in very different ways. Thanks to quick and decisive action, Vietnam came through relatively unscathed; Singapore also seemed to have the virus under control, before a second wave of infections among migrant labourers took off, Malaysia and Thailand initially struggled, but now seem to have turned the situation around. In Indonesia and the Philippines, the disease continues to spread rapidly. Although weak healthcare systems make Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, the three poorest countries of the region, highly vulnerable, they have not reported many infections so far. Despite such differences, some of the issues raised by the coronavirus pandemic are common to all countries of the region. For example, pre-existing inequalities have widened, particularly affecting low-paid workers in informal employment, migrants, and refugees. Meanwhile, governments are clamping down on free speech and adopting emergency powers, raising concerns over authoritarian tendencies. Although the countries of the region are cooperating with each other and neighbours such as China, tensions (for example, in the South China Sea) have become more apparent. All south-east Asian economies have been affected, but the impact varies considerably. Vietnam is expected to do relatively well, and several other countries will also see modest growth. Due to a global downturn in trade and tourism, Singapore and Thailand are suffering most. Overall, the region is forecast to see less of an economic impact than Europe or North America, and growth is expected to rebound in 2021.

**Hong Kong: A Beijing-imposed security law?**

**Publication type**  At a Glance  
**Date**  11-06-2020  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** autonomy | extradition | Hong Kong | United Kingdom | government violence | international agreement | constitution | political crisis | repression | authoritarian regime | rule of law | China  
**Summary** On 28 May 2020, the National People's Congress (NPC) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) authorised its Standing Committee to adopt a national security law for Hong Kong, bypassing the city's Parliament, the Legislative Council. The law, expected to enter into force prior to Hong Kong's legislative elections scheduled for September 2020, is likely to be a turning point for the city's 'high degree of autonomy' and a premature phasing out of the 'One country, two systems' model that was planned to subsist for 50 years from 1997. The European Parliament is expected to debate a statement from the High Representative during the June plenary session.
Discriminatory Laws Undermining Women’s Rights

This paper provides insight into the current situation and recent trends in the abolition or reform of discriminatory laws undermining women’s rights in countries outside the European Union (EU). The paper aims to provide a nuanced understanding of processes through which legal reforms take place. Among the factors that have proven to facilitate legal reform are the ratification of international human rights treaties, feminist activism, legal and public advocacy by women’s rights and other human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs), political dialogue, and increased women’s representation in decision-making processes. Incremental steps supported by the EU towards the abolition of discriminatory laws across all legal categories, EU engagement with a broad range of stakeholders at both national and local levels, programmes supporting the gathering of gender-disaggregated data across all sectors and the publicising of data to draw attention to gender inequality in law and practice, among others, can all contribute towards successful reform of discriminatory laws. Striking the right balance between funding programmes that mainstream gender and funding dedicated to gender-targeted programmes, together with the increased use of country gender profiles, are essential in order to achieve quality legal reforms.
Challenges facing India's democracy and economy
Publication type Briefing
Date 13-05-2020
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus
Keyword national election | secularity | India | economic recession | democracy
Summary India has a 70-year history of democracy, tolerance and rule of law, and a successful record of managing its patchwork of cultures and religions. In recent months, however, following the second consecutive victory of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party in the May 2019 general elections, this situation has been changing under the impact of an ever-increasing Hindu nationalist grip on society and politics. After Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, lost its autonomy, the government adopted the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), allowing foreigners from six religious communities living in three neighbouring countries to apply for Indian citizenship at a faster pace. This new legislation has prompted protests and divisions across India, as, according to both internal and external observers, citizenship would be determined along religious criteria, which risks undermining the country's traditional secularism. The government's plan to launch a national register of citizens has further increased the Muslim community's fear of discrimination. Communal tensions flared into violence in late February 2020 in Delhi, claiming 53 lives. At the same time, India's economy is experiencing a severe downturn: even before the coronavirus outbreak started to have an effect, its growth was slackening and so was job creation, while at the same time unemployment is high, consumer confidence and spending are low, and trust in the banking sector is eroding as credit weakness and non-performing loans hinder its performance. Contrary to expectations, the Union budget for financial year 2021 has not tackled existing structural weaknesses or generated a large fiscal stimulus as an answer to the slowdown.

China’s democratic neighbours and coronavirus: Protecting populations without lockdowns
Publication type Briefing
Date 06-05-2020
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO | Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus
Keyword economic consequence | epidemic | Asia | coronavirus disease | disease prevention | China
Summary North-east Asian countries have deep and historical economic, human and cultural connections with China, based on their geographical proximity to the latter country, and were the first to be exposed to the coronavirus contagion after its initial outbreak. They were not caught unprepared, having dealt with the SARS and the MERS epidemics in recent times. South Korea and Taiwan, in particular, have successfully showcased a model characterised by minimal restrictions on economic activities and daily lives, where safeguarding the health of the people has not had devastating consequences for the health of the economy, as witnessed in other parts of the world. They have also showed that it is possible to effectively manage the coronavirus threat transparently, without authoritarian methods. Their models, illustrating that it is possible to implement a successful – albeit sometimes unnoticed – alternative to a liberal laissez-faire model or to a drastic lockdown, could become precious assets for public diplomacy and soft power tools. Given the high rate of information and communications technology penetration in the region, it has been easier for the authorities to make use of big data and contact-tracing by smartphone in order to prevent the pandemic from spreading, as well as collect information on those infected. However, this approach has raised issues of privacy, especially as the details collected allow the identification of those infected and could possibly expose them to stigmatisation. Despite the coronavirus outbreak, South Korea is a healthy democracy. It successfully held a general election on 15 April 2020, giving substance to the statement made by the European Parliament's President, David Sassoli: 'Democracy cannot be suspended in the face of Covid-19'.

Australia’s restrictions on movement in response to the coronavirus pandemic
Publication type At a Glance
Date 27-04-2020
Author Krisztina BINDER
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Coronavirus
Keyword epidemic | Australia | coronavirus disease | disease prevention | free movement of persons
Summary The Australian federal government, and state and territory governments, are working together to provide an effective national response to the coronavirus pandemic. The federal government’s response, in terms of emergency measures designed to limit the spread of the virus, includes travel restrictions and efforts to ensure that travellers self-isolate on arrival in Australia. State and territory governments, for their part, have imposed travel restrictions between and within their jurisdictions, and imposed restrictions on social interaction, among other measures.
Australia: Economic indicators and trade with EU

Publication type At a Glance
Date 24-02-2020
Author NADEJDA KRESNICHKA-NIKOLCHOVA
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword trade by country | foreign investment | employment statistics | Australia | import (EU) | economic statistics | export (EU) | public finance | gross domestic product | corruption | socioeconomic conditions
Summary Australia was the world's 13th largest economy in 2018, with growth in gross domestic product (GDP) at 2.9%. It has a strong and dynamic relationship with the EU. Negotiations for a free trade agreement between Australia and the EU were formally launched in June 2018. In 2018, Australia was the EU's 19th largest trading partner, with a 1.2% share of the EU's total trade. Further information on EU-Australia trade relations, such as the composition of trade between the two partners, can be found in this infographic, which also provides an economic snapshot of Australia.

Government system and institutions of Australia

Publication type Briefing
Date 24-02-2020
Author Jakub PRZETACZNIK | Krisztina BINDER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword summarising | political system | Australia | Commonwealth
Summary The Commonwealth of Australia, as Australia is officially known, was established on 1 January 1901 with the federation of six former British colonies. The Constitution, which came into effect on the same day, provides the rules by which Australia is governed and divides government responsibilities into three separate branches: parliament, executive and judiciary. In addition to being a federation, Australia is also a representative democracy and a constitutional monarchy. Queen Elisabeth II, who resides in the United Kingdom (UK), is the official head of state of the Commonwealth of Australia. Australia's system of government is modelled on the Westminster system deriving from the British tradition. The Commonwealth parliament, made up of the Queen and the two Houses of Parliament, in addition to holding the legislative power, is at the heart of the tradition of responsible government. This means that government ministers, who all must be members of parliament, are accountable to, and must answer to, the parliament for their actions. There are three levels of government within the country, namely the Commonwealth (federal), state or territory, and local level. Under Australia's federal system, the powers of government are divided between the federal and the state governments. Out of the 10 territories that are part of the Commonwealth, two have been granted a level of self-government by the federal parliament. Consequently, Australia has a federal parliament, as well as six state and two territory parliaments. It also has a federal executive government, as well as six state and two territory executive governments. A third, local level of Australian government was established by state and territory governments. The High Court of Australia is the highest court in the judicial system.

Accords internationaux en marche: Le futur partenariat de l’UE avec les pays d’Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique (« post-Cotonou »)

Publication type Briefing
Date 19-02-2020
Author Eric PICHON
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid
Trade and investment agreements with Vietnam

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 05-02-2020  
**Author** Martin RUSSELL  
**Policy area** International Trade  
**Keyword** EU investment | trade agreement (EU) | Vietnam | human rights  
**Summary** In 2019, Vietnam became the second south-east Asian country after Singapore to sign trade and investment agreements with the EU. The agreements are expected to bring major economic benefits to both sides, but opinions are divided on whether the Parliament should consent to them, due to human rights issues in Vietnam.

At a Glance ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL

2019 Sakharov Prize laureate: Ilham Tohti

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 10-12-2019  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Human Rights  
**Keyword** cultural prize | human rights movement | freedom of opinion  
**Summary** Space for freedom of thought is shrinking dramatically across the globe, as the geo-political and geo-economic clout of authoritarian regimes expands. The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is therefore more important than ever: it enables the European Parliament to draw attention to the plight of those who stand up against the repression of human rights and fundamental freedoms, principles on which the EU is based and which it promotes in its external relations, in line with Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. The 2019 Sakharov Prize laureate is renowned Uyghur economics professor Ilham Tohti, a moderate advocate of the rights of the Uyghur minority and of dialogue with the Han majority in China. In 2014, he was sentenced to life imprisonment on separatism-related charges, against the backdrop of China's hardening policy of countering religious extremism, ethnic separatism and terrorism – one that now frames Uyghur identity as a major national security threat. The Sakharov Prize is a €50 000 award, which will be presented at a ceremony in the European Parliament during the December plenary session in Strasbourg, in the presence of the other finalists.

At a Glance ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL

Commitments made at the hearing of Josep BORRELL FONTELLES, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President-designate of the European Commission

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 22-11-2019  
**Author** Marika LERCH | Jesper TVEVAD | Jérôme LEGRAND  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Human Rights  
**Keyword** European neighbourhood policy | climate change | oral question | disinformation | enlargement of the Union | EU migration policy | arms trade | nuclear non-proliferation | common foreign and security policy | information warfare | High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy | human rights  
**Summary** The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President designate of the European Commission, Josep Borrell, appeared before the European Parliament on 7 October 2019 to answer MEPs’ questions. During the hearing, he made a number of commitments which are highlighted in this document.

Briefing EN

Louise Weiss - Campaigner for liberty

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 20-11-2019  
**Author** Philippe PERCHOC  
**Policy area** Culture | Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity  
**Keyword** literary profession | biography | historical figure | political figure | human rights movement  
**Summary** Throughout her career in the public eye, Louise Weiss was both a writer and an activist. She was among those who promoted the European ideal on the basis of their experiences during the First World War. Like many other people who were similarly influenced, Louise Weiss was a product of the borderlands, her family having come from the part of eastern France that had been annexed by Germany in 1871. Louise Weiss devoted her life to various campaigns, which can be seen as having been mutually reinforcing: the battle for women's rights, the battles for Europe and for freedom for the nations of central Europe, and the intellectual struggle to analyse and eradicate the roots of war. At different times in her life, she was a journalist, a politician, a committed intellectual and a maker of documentary films in many parts of the world. Her commitment to Europe remained the underlying theme of everything she did, and in 1979 she successfully stood as a candidate in the first elections to the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage. As the oldest member of the assembly, she gave the inaugural speech, before handing over the presidency to another woman who had campaigned for Europe, Simone Veil. Today, the building in which the European Parliament has its plenary chamber in Strasbourg is named after Louise Weiss.

Briefing DE, EN, FR, IT
The Mekong River: geopolitics over development, hydropower and the environment

Publication type: Study
Date: 18-11-2019
Author: Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ
Policy area: Environment | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights
Keyword: climate change | South-East Asia | watercourse | water policy | water protection | sustainable development

Summary: The Mekong River is a vital source of livelihoods and economic activity in continental South-East Asia and extends from the Tibetan Plateau to the South China Sea. Its length is 4,800 km. More than half circulates in China, but its channel runs through Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. The Mekong has the world’s largest inland freshwater fishery industry, vital to the region’s food security, representing around USD 3 billion per year. Its unique and rich biological habitat provides diverse livelihoods as well as four fifths of the animal protein for more than 60 million people. At the level of biodiversity, the importance of this river for global nature is vital.

The Mekong region is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and to the degradation of ecosystems. The uncontrolled growth of the population both in China and in Southeast Asia is exerting unsustainable pressure on the Mekong in terms of a massive exploitation of all kinds of resources linked to the River: water, food, wood, energy, especially recent infrastructure and hydropower development, together with deforestation, illegal wildlife trade and habitat fragmentation. Water scarcity leads to reduced agricultural productivity, unemployment and poverty.

Four countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam) formed an intergovernmental agency in 1950, The Mekong River Commission (MRC), to defend the sustainable development of the Mekong River and to plan its future. The absence of China and Myanmar mitigates and erodes the effective organization of the MRC on the management of the River. The lack of implementing mechanisms denatures the organization itself.

Study EN

International Agreements in Progress: EU-Vietnam trade and investment agreements

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-11-2019
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: revision of an agreement | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | ratification of an agreement | EU investment | free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | economic relations | Vietnam

Summary: The European Commission has described the free trade and investment protection agreements (FTA/IPA) signed with Vietnam as the most ambitious deals of their type ever concluded by the EU and a developing country. Not only will they eliminate over 99% of customs duties on goods, they will also open up Vietnamese markets to European service providers and investors.

According to European Commission figures, the agreements will boost trade in both directions, with EU exports set to rise by nearly 30%. Vietnam is the second south-east Asian country after Singapore to sign trade and investment agreements with the EU, bringing the long-term goal of a region-to-region EU-ASEAN trade deal a step closer.

In view of the human rights situation in Vietnam, opinions are divided on whether the agreements should be ratified. Critics argue that the EU should not approve the agreements until the situation improves. On the other hand, defenders point out that the FTA/IPA include commitments to stronger human rights (such as allowing independent trade unions); they also insist that the EU can best help to bring about improvements by engaging with Vietnam.

Following the same approach as for Singapore, the single text originally agreed in 2015 with Vietnam has been split into two parts, an FTA covering exclusive EU competences and an IPA that includes competences that are shared with EU Member States. The European Parliament is set to vote in February 2020, if it gives its consent, the two agreements will then have to be ratified by Vietnam and (for the IPA) the EU Member States before entering into force.

Briefing EN

China’s growing role as a security actor in Africa

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-10-2019
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: regional security | defence policy | Africa | financial aid | trade relations | China

Summary: China has emerged as an important economic, political but also security actor in Africa as a result of its ‘Going out’ policy officially launched in 2001, and the massive roll-out of its signature connectivity strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), since 2013. The presence of Chinese citizens and economic assets in Africa has grown substantially due to China’s expanding trade with, and China-funded infrastructure projects in, African countries. Many of those countries are plagued by intrastate armed conflicts, jihadist terrorism or maritime piracy off their coasts.

The rising number of violent attacks against Chinese workers, calls from the domestic Chinese audience for action, and surging economic loss are some of the factors that have compelled the Chinese government to react. China has shifted from compromising non-involvement to selective and incremental engagement in bilateral, regional and international cooperation on peace and security by nuancing, on a case-by-case basis, the narrow boundaries of its normative foreign policy framework, including the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of foreign countries, that had made a previously inward-looking China for decades a free-rider on global security, provided by the US in particular.

As in other fields, China has pursued a two-pronged approach to African security issues, to defend its economic and security interests and to expand its influence in Africa. On the one hand, it has contributed to existing multilateral structures and instruments to foster peace and security. It has participated in UN-led peacekeeping missions to Africa and in the UN-mandated counter-piracy action off the Horn of Africa. Both have provided the pretext for China to accelerate its massive blue-water navy build up, to be present in the Indian Ocean and beyond and to set up its first overseas military base, in Djibouti. On the other hand, it has expanded its military presence by engaging African countries bilaterally through joint drills, military training, and military infrastructure-building and multilaterally through the newly created China-Africa fora on security issues. Against this backdrop it remains to be seen how complementary or competitive the future EU-China security cooperation, which so far has remained in its infancy, will be in seeking ‘African solutions to African problems’.

Briefing EN
Free trade or geo-economics? Trends in world trade

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 27-09-2019
Author: Mario DAMEN | WOLFGANG IGLER
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: World Trade Organisation | free movement of goods | international trade | world economy | globalisation

Summary: The European Union (EU) is the biggest integrated economic zone and a guarantor of an open and predictable regulatory system able to determine its own economic destiny. But the behaviour of other global powers is increasingly calling this ability into question. China and the United States, especially, do not separate economic interests from geopolitical interests in the same way the EU does and are increasingly trying to gain geopolitical advantage using their economic might.

The EU is known as a fierce defender of a multilateral rules-based trade system with free but fair trade as its strategic policy objective. The EU will therefore do its utmost to save a ‘meaningful multilateralism’ by helping to reform the WTO, improve multilateral investment protection and conclude multilateral trade agreements. At the same time, the EU will defend its own interests by negotiating bilateral trade deals and applying trade defence and investment screening where needed. The EU has a strong interest in keeping the use of geo-economic measures manageable and avoid escalation into a trade war.

India-administered Kashmir: current situation

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 13-09-2019
Author: Enrico D’AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: autonomy | Kashmir question | India

Summary: On 5 and 6 August 2019, the Indian Parliament approved the withdrawal of Article 370 of the Constitution, which had guaranteed Jammu and Kashmir, India’s only Muslim-majority state, a high degree of autonomy. It also decided to split Jammu and Kashmir into two territories, both administered directly from Delhi. Meanwhile, the government deployed 46 000 troops, arrested regional political leaders and thousands of activists, suspended internet and communications across the valley, and shut down schools and colleges.

Trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand

Publication type: Study
Date: 03-05-2019
External author: Louise CURRAN
Policy area: Forward Planning | International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: New Zealand | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Australia | free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | trade policy

Summary: This study explores the context and potential of the FTA negotiations between the EU and Australia and New Zealand. Through an analysis of the status quo, as well as several academic and policy analyses, it highlights the main opportunities for the EU from the negotiations, as well as potential threats and obstacles to agreement. The study explores in detail the likely impacts of market opening on trade in goods and services, as well as the potential in other key areas, including public procurement and investment. It also highlights the current architecture of FTAs which Australia and New Zealand have established, especially the very recent Comprehensive and Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), to which both are party. It explores how these agreements impact on the EU’s competitiveness in the Australian and New Zealand markets and how FTAs could be leveraged to improve EU integration with these partners and their broader region. The study also considers how trade and sustainable development (TSD) can be effectively integrated into the agreements, in line with the objectives of the EU’s ‘Trade for All’ strategy. Finally, several potential wider, more political impacts of the FTAs are underlined.
India: taking stock of Modi’s five years
Publication type Briefing
Date 10-04-2019
Author Enrico D’AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword national election | labour law | freedom of expression | India | youth employment | common foreign and security policy | economic reform | foreign policy | rule of law | corruption | Hinduism | human rights
Summary From 11 April to 18 May 2019, 900 million Indians are invited to take part in the world’s biggest democratic event: the election of the 543 members of the Lok Sabha (lower chamber). Voting will be held across the country in seven phases and the result will be declared on 23 May. In 2014 the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) obtained the absolute majority in India's Lok Sabha, and Narendra Modi became prime minister. Enjoying a strong and undisputed mandate, Modi has generated expectations of unleashing the country’s economic potential and has adopted many flagship initiatives in a bid to change the country. In the last five years, India has overtaken China as the fastest growing economy, becoming the world's sixth biggest economy and a space power. Doing business in the country has become easier. Poverty has been reduced. The government succeeded in introducing major fiscal unification reform and a new law on bankruptcy. It failed, however, to create the necessary stock of jobs for young people or to promote long-awaited labour reforms. The situation for farmers has worsened, and an overnight demonetisation hindered progress among small businesses and rural communities, while failing to bring real advances in the fight against corruption. State banks hold large stocks of bad loans and the government has increased pressure on the central bank and on its independence. Hindu nationalism and religious intolerance, pressure on freedom of expression, possible state intrusion into private citizenship issues and other topics have been matters for concern in the area of human rights, although the country remains a robust democracy governed by the rule of law. Modi has increased the country’s presence in the global arena, although the framework of India’s relations with the major powers has not changed. Following two summits in 2016 and 2017, the EU and India have embarked on a road towards cooperation on non-trade issues. Trade has meanwhile stagnated and little progress has been made in negotiations on a trade and investment agreement.

Towards a new EU policy approach to China: 21st EU-China Summit – April 2019
Publication type At a Glance
Date 08-04-2019
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword technology transfer | land transport | United States | transmission network | agreement on government procurement | trade dispute | multilateral relations | international trade | designation of origin | market access | summit meeting | China
Summary With the European Parliament elections set for May 2019, the 21st EU-China Summit has been advanced, to be held in Brussels on 9 April 2019, only nine months after the previous one. The 2018 summit’s joint statement captured a broad range of deliverables that had been achieved over a three-year period, since the EU and China had failed to agree on joint statements in 2016 and 2017. Considering that not even the short-term commitments on the trade and investment agenda from 2018 have been met, that the context of US-China great power competition looms large and that the EU has adopted more assertive language in its recently issued EU-China strategic outlook, it remains to be seen whether meaningful outcomes will be reached at this year’s summit.

5G Deployment: State of play in Europe, USA and Asia
Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 03-04-2019
External author Colin Blackman, Simon Forge
Policy area Research Policy | Forward Planning | Internal Market and Customs Union | Industry
Keyword United States | transmission network | Asia | comparative study | trans-European network
Summary This in-depth analysis was prepared by Policy Department A at the request of the ITRE Committee. It compares 5G deployment in the EU with other leading economies – the USA, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. On a range of indicators, the EU compares well. However, this is not a short-term race. 5G is more complex than previous wireless technologies and should be considered as a long-term project to solve technical challenges and develop a clear business case.
Taiwan's political survival in a challenging geopolitical context

Publication type Briefing
Date 26-03-2019
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword Hong Kong | United States | the EU's international role | national unification | Taiwan | democracy | authoritarian regime | rights of the individual | common foreign and security policy | rule of law | China | human rights
Summary Since the landmark victory of Tsai Ing-wen from Taiwan's pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in the 2016 presidential elections, mainland China has intensified the island's international isolation and intimidation through political pressure, economic coercion and military drills. In a January 2019 speech commemorating the 40th anniversary of the 1979 'Message to Compatriots in Taiwan', China's President, Xi Jinping, alluded to the inevitability of unification based on a 'one country, two systems' formula, which is widely rejected in Taiwan. Taiwan's successful transition from an authoritarian anti-communist bulwark led by the Nationalist Party or Kuomintang (KMT), to a liberal multi-party democracy that embraces individual political freedoms, the rule of law and universal human rights, is a challenge for the authoritarian one-party system of the People's Republic of China (PRC), as it belies mainland China's rhetoric that a liberal multi-party democracy is unsuitable for Chinese people. Taiwan's political survival within the fragile status quo of cross-strait relations ultimately depends on the United States' continued national interest in ensuring that Taiwan's defence capabilities and the US's military supremacy over the PRC act as a deterrent against a potential invasion of Taiwan by mainland China's military forces. Against the backdrop of the PRC's increasingly aggressive Taiwan policy and growing US-China strategic competition on multiple fronts, the US has expanded its long-standing commitments in support of Taiwan's defence and democracy, and considers the island as a partner in promoting the goals and values of the US's free and open Indo-Pacific strategy. The EU maintains a 'One China' policy, which recognises the PRC government as the sole legal government of China. However, since the EU and Taiwan are like-minded in many regards and the EU respects Taiwan's governance system, it is interested in closer cooperation with Taiwan on non-political issues, even in the absence of diplomatic recognition.

Parliamentary scrutiny of trade policies across the western world

Publication type Study
Date 25-03-2019
External author Bart KERREMANS, Johan ADRIAENSEN, Francesca COLLI, Evelyn COREMANS
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | International Trade | Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | parliamentary scrutiny | United States | Australia | comparative study | trade agreement (EU) | Canada
Summary The Lisbon Treaty increased the European Parliament’s powers over EU trade policy. Ten years after its entry into force it is timely to take stock of how the EP has made use of this leverage in shaping the EU’s trade negotiations. Such an exercise benefits from a comparison with other well-established parliamentary democracies, particularly the key partners with whom the EU has recently negotiated or has started to negotiate a comprehensive trade agreement. This study compares parliamentary scrutiny of trade policy in the EU with the United States, Canada and Australia. It concludes that the European Parliament has become powerful and active in trade policy, on a comparable level to the US Congress. Its powers exceed those of other Western democracies, such as Australia and Canada. From the latter the European Parliament may conclude that it is important to codify some of its informal oversight practices, before they may get lost over time again. This may also help to encourage its trading partners to increase their parliamentary involvement during negotiations with the EU. As regards the implementation of trade agreements however, the EU has very few competences in comparison to all other three countries analysed.

Impact of Digitalisation on International Tax Matters

Publication type Study
Date 15-02-2019
External author Eli Hadzhieva
Policy area Taxation
Keyword digital single market | digital economy taxation | digital technology
Summary This paper was prepared by Policy Department A at the request of the Committee on Financial Crimes, Tax Evasion and Tax Avoidance (TAX3) to discuss tax challenges posed by digitalisation, especially regarding new business models and value creation process, the impact of Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) actions, unilateral measures and recent tax developments in the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) while evaluating alternative approaches to reform the international tax system and highlighting difficulties and opportunities presented by Blockchain and collaborative economy for international taxation.
Trade and investment agreements with Singapore

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 07-02-2019
Author: Krisztina BINDER

Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: EP Committee | recommendation (EU) | bilateral agreement | Singapore | investment protection | opinion of the Court of Justice (EU) | trade agreement (EU) | investment abroad | international trade

Summary: The trade and investment agreements with Singapore, the EU's largest commercial partner in the region, are the first between the EU and a member state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The EU views bilateral agreements with ASEAN countries as steps towards the final objective of a region-to-region trade and investment agreement with ASEAN. The European Parliament is due to vote on giving its consent to the conclusion of the agreements with Singapore during the February plenary session.

At a Glance EN

EU preparedness against CBRN weapons

Publication type: Study
Date: 29-01-2019
External author: Elisande NEXON, Senior Research Fellow, and Claude WACHTEL, Independent Consultant, Associate Senior Research Fellow, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS), France

Policy area: Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Security and Defence
Keyword: crisis management | dissemination of EU information | NATO | geopolitics | weapon of mass destruction | international conflict | common security and defence policy

Summary: The European Union faces an increasingly challenging security environment, with a climate of international instability and a level of tension not seen since the end of the Cold War. Repeated chemical attacks by both State and non-state actors in the context of the Syrian conflict, the Novichok attack in Salisbury and the disruption of two ricine terror plots in Germany and in France in 2018 came all as stark reminders that the threat remains real and that Member States could be affected. In this context, the European Union (EU) continues to strengthen its capacities in the field of CBRN preparedness and response. The use of EU mechanisms and Member States’ military assets is one of the possibilities for strengthening prevention capacities that must be explored more thoroughly.

Study EN

International Agreements in Progress: The EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) - A framework to promote shared values

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 22-01-2019
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council
Keyword: impact study | free-trade agreement | Japan | bilateral relations | international negotiations | international trade

Summary: The EU and Japan share the same basic values, including on democracy, market economy, human rights, human dignity, freedom, equality, and the rule of law. Against a background of increasingly assertive neighbours, they are also putting emphasis on security issues. The EU has adopted a Global Strategy placing security and defence as a key strategic priority, and conclusions on ‘enhanced EU security cooperation in and with Asia’. Japan has reformed its security policy, aiming at becoming a ‘proactive contributor for peace’. In order to enhance their relations, in July 2018 the EU and Japan signed a binding Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) – to come into force following ratification by all Member States – along with an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), negotiated in parallel. The SPA represents a framework strengthening the overall partnership, by promoting political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions in more than 40 areas of common interest. Once in force, the EU-Japan strategic partnership will become more operational. The agreement will facilitate joint EU-Japan efforts to promote shared values such as human rights and rule of law, a rules-based international system, and peace and stability across the world. It will allow EU-Japan security cooperation to reach its full potential. Second edition. The ‘International Agreements in Progress’ briefings are updated at key stages throughout the process, from initial discussions through to ratification.

Briefing EN, SL

IMF World Economic Outlook reflects consensus views

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 15-01-2019
Author: Dirk VERBEKEN | Denitza DESSIMIROVA

Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: economic forecasting | United States | economic growth | Asia | EU Member State | International Monetary Fund

Summary: This briefing is provided by Policy Department A following the participation of the Members of the European Parliament’s Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) in the Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) Group in Indonesia on 8-14 October 2018.

Briefing EN
Prospects for EU-Asia connectivity - The 'European way to connectivity'

This study provides a comparative analysis of global agricultural policies aimed at drawing lessons for the future of the CAP. Against the background of the main trends in agricultural support as well as recent changes and new initiatives in global agricultural policies, an in-depth analysis is made of selected instruments in five countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, US). Recommendations are made on how current instruments and the policy mix can be improved to better address challenges for agriculture and rural development in the European Union.

Study EN

Accords internationaux en marche: Le futur partenariat de l'Union européenne avec les pays d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique


Briefing FR

Research for TRAN Committee - Transport and Tourism in China

This overview of the transport and tourism sectors in China was prepared to provide information for the mission of the Committee on Transport and Tourism to the country between 30 October and 2 November 2018.

Briefing EN

Prospects for EU-Asia connectivity - The 'European way to connectivity'

Asia matters to Europe: home to the world’s largest population and fastest-growing economies, Asia is a major trade partner of the EU. Recognising this, the EU has promoted the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), established strategic partnerships with four Asian countries, intensified cooperation with the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN), and negotiated or concluded free trade agreements with several Asian countries. As an implementation of its 2016 Global Strategy, the EU has carried out a mapping exercise on Euro-Asian connectivity, followed by the adoption of a joint communication on 'Connecting Europe and Asia – Building blocks for an EU strategy' on 19 September 2018. The strategy proposes that the EU engage with its Asian partners through a sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based approach to connectivity, exploiting existing and planned EU networks. It acknowledges a significant investment gap in connectivity and recognises the need to mobilise and strengthen cooperation with private investors, national and international institutions, and multilateral development banks. The strategy is part of the EU's contribution to the ASEM12 Summit, which is to take place in Brussels on 18-19 October 2018. Presented by Vice President/High Representative, Federica Mogherini, as the 'European way to connectivity', the strategy was immediately perceived as the EU response to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This initiative is currently raising concerns in the EU and in several participating countries, some of which are worried about possible ‘debt traps’.

Briefing EN
China’s climate policies with an emphasis on carbon trading markets

International Agreements in Progress: EU-Singapore trade and investment agreements closer to conclusion

The EU - Japan Economic Partnership Agreement
India: Energy issues
Publication type At a Glance
Date 07-09-2018
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Energy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword clean technology | India | reduction of gas emissions | energy consumption
Summary India's energy consumption is set to grow faster than that of any other major economy, and the country is to overtake China as the largest-growing market for energy by the end of the 2020s. In spite of its large population, its share of global energy consumption, currently at 5%, should grow moderately to reach 11% in 2040. India's government plans to bring electricity to every household by the end of 2018. India's energy mix, mostly based on fossil fuels, is to evolve very slowly in the future, but renewables – especially solar power – will gain relevance.

A new era in EU-China relations: more wide-ranging strategic cooperation?
Publication type Study
Date 19-07-2018
Author Anna SAARELA
Policy area International Trade
Keyword trade by country | political situation | investment abroad | environmental policy | foreign policy | extra-EU trade | human rights | China | foreign investment | EU relations | economic cooperation | trade policy | geopolitics | economic situation
Summary China is an important strategic partner for the EU, despite fundamental divergences in some areas, mostly related to state intervention and fundamental human rights. The partnership offers mutually beneficial cooperation and dialogue in areas ranging from investment and transport to human rights and cybersecurity. China is navigating in new directions, guided by Xi Jinping’s ‘Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era’. Despite President Xi’s repeated avowals that ‘the market will have a decisive role’, public ownership remains the mainstay of the Chinese economy, whereas profound reforms would be needed to tackle the root causes of overcapacity in various industrial sectors. Xi’s ‘Belt and Road Initiative’, now also included in the Constitution, is the flagship international connectivity and infrastructure programme dominated by Chinese state-owned companies. Overall, China’s crucial, but complex transition towards more sustainable growth would eventually benefit both, China and the world as a whole. Global economic interdependence, however, makes certain spill-over effects of China’s rebalancing unavoidable. China plays a pivotal role in global governance and the rules-based international order, and this comes with responsibilities. Beijing has begun to shift away from the narrow pursuit of national aims towards a more assertive foreign and security policy, and increased financial, economic and security cooperation with a global outreach. China is also facing domestic concerns, such as lifting millions of people out of poverty and reducing ever-growing income inequalities, deterioration in the situation of human rights and freedoms as well as endemic corruption.

Accords internationaux en marche: Le futur partenariat de l’Union européenne avec les pays d’Afrique, des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
Publication type Briefing
Date 05-07-2018
Author Eric PICHON
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council

Briefing FR
FTA negotiations to start with Australia and New Zealand

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 11-06-2018
Author: Krisztina BINDER

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: impact study | New Zealand | EU investment | Australia | liberalisation of trade | public procurement | trade agreement (EU) | investment abroad | designation of origin | market access

Summary: On 22 May 2018, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate free trade agreements (FTAs) with Australia and New Zealand, and adopted the related negotiating directives. The FTAs will mainly focus on further reducing existing trade obstacles, eliminating custom duties on goods, and improving access for services and public procurement in Australia and New Zealand. The first negotiation rounds are expected to take place in July 2018, and the Commission aims to conclude negotiations before the end of its term in late 2019.

EU-Japan cooperation on global and regional security - a litmus test for the EU’s role as a global player?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 11-06-2018
Author: Jérôme LEGRAND

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: information security | the EU's international role | Japan | common foreign and security policy | information warfare | foreign policy | China | regional security | defence policy | North Korea | terrorism | Russia | military cooperation | nuclear non-proliferation | territorial dispute | geopolitics

Summary: Within their partnership, the EU and Japan recognise each other as being essentially civilian (or 'soft') powers that share the same values and act in the international arena solely with diplomatic means. However, the evolution of the threats they face and the unpredictability now shown by their strategic ally, the US, have led both the EU and Japan to reconsider the option of 'soft power-only' for ensuring their security. They have both begun the— albeit long —process of seeking greater strategic autonomy. The EU’s Global Strategy adopted in 2016 aims clearly to 'develop a more politically rounded approach to Asia, seeking to make greater practical contributions to Asian security'.

Like the EU, Japan has identified 'a multipolar age' in which the rules-based international order that has allowed it to prosper is increasingly threatened. In line with its security-related reforms, Japan has decided to 'take greater responsibilities and roles than before in order to maintain the existing international order' and resolve a number of global issues. The EU and Japan may increase their cooperation at the global and strategic level and in tackling these challenges at the regional or local level. The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the EU and Japan will provide opportunities for such cooperation, which should also be open to others. This is an opportunity for the EU to demonstrate that it is a consistent and reliable partner, and a true 'global player'. The Council Conclusions of 28 May 2018 on ‘Enhanced security cooperation in and with Asia’ are a step in this direction but need to be translated into action.

Research for AGRI Committee - Agricultural trade: assessing reciprocity of standards

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-05-2018

Policy area: International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development | Contract Law, Commercial Law and Company Law
Keyword: food production | South Korea | bilateral agreement | trade agreement (EU) | agricultural trade | Canada | harmonisation of standards | common agricultural policy | certificate of origin

Summary: The aim of this study is to provide an assessment of the application of the reciprocity principle in EU agri-food trade at global level. The report provides substantial evidence for progresses occurring at worldwide level in regulatory rapprochement. Scientific cooperation, collaboration between risk assessment bodies, harmonization of control procedures and early warning systems for emerging hazards can facilitate progress in this direction, reducing transaction costs and information asymmetries in agri-food trade.

Water disputes in the Mekong basin

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-04-2018
Author: Martin RUSSELL

Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Laos | Burma/Myanmar | freshwater fishing | cross-border dimension | inland waters | freshwater ecosystem | agricultural production | Thailand | hydroelectric power | Cambodia | China | Vietnam

Summary: The Mekong is south-east Asia's longest river (around 4 900km). From its source in Tibet, it flows southwards through the Chinese province of Yunnan before passing through five south-east Asian countries (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam). Nearly half of the river is in China, where it is known as the Lancang. For the 70 million people who live in the Mekong basin, the river is a vital source of food and water, as well as an important transport route. Increasingly, it is being used to generate hydroelectricity. Human activity threatens the river's fauna and flora, and competition for natural resources is intensifying.
**Free Trade Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Singapore – Analysis**

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 16-03-2018  
**External author** Glyn CHAMBERS, Managing Economist Capital Economics, Melanie DEBONO, Economist Capital Economics, Costas FRANGESKIDES, Partner Holman Fenwick Willan, Jody GALLAGHER, Trainee Solicitor Holman Fenwick Willan, Dr Peter HOLMES, Reader in Economics at Sussex University (project leader), Jeremy KELLY, Associate Holman Fenwick Willan, Eirini ROUSSOU, Senior Associate Holman Fenwick Willan, Cliff STEVENSON, Cliff Stevenson Consulting, Anthony WOOLICH, Partner Holman Fenwick Willan  
**Policy area** International Trade  
**Keyword** common commercial policy | public contract | free-trade agreement | investment protection | sustainable development | comparative study | Canada | investment abroad | goods and services | market access | economic consequence | foreign investment | South Korea | Singapore | trade agreement (EU) | intellectual property

**Summary**  
This study analyses provisions of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement concluded in May 2015 (‘EUSFTA’). It compares EUSFTA with other ‘new-generation’ free trade agreements, such as the EU-Republic of Korea and the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

Overall, EUSFTA adopts a WTO+ approach and as a result significantly liberalises trade between the EU and Singapore compared to the current trade relationship. The study finds that a number of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods and services that currently exist between the parties will be reduced or removed on EUSFTA’s entry into force.

EUSFTA, as with other ‘new-generation’ FTAs negotiated by the EU, adopts a comprehensive approach, and contains innovative provisions on investment, intellectual property rights, competition and public procurement. It also contains provisions which reflect growing concerns about the impact of global trade, such as those on trade and sustainable development.

With regard to EUSFTA’s potential impact on trade, the economic modelling estimates an increase of around 10 % in trade volumes and greater volumes of foreign direct investment between the EU and Singapore as a result of the agreement. It also concludes that EUSFTA should lead to small increases of the gross domestic products of the EU and Singapore (0.06 % and 0.35 %, respectively).

The responses of a wide-range of EU and Singaporean stakeholder consultation reveal that, in general, EUSFTA is viewed positively and is considered a very ambitious agreement, which will offer new opportunities for trade and investment in the EU and Singapore. However, some concerns have been raised, especially by small and medium-sized enterprises.

The implications of the result of the Opinion of the Court of Justice of the EU in case 2/15 of 2017, on whether the EU had exclusive competence to sign and conclude EUSFTA alone, is also analysed in detail.

The study recommends, notably, monitoring closely that commitments taken under sustainable development provisions are implemented and used effectively in practice.

Study  EN

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**China’s Maritime Silk Road initiative increasingly touches the EU**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 15-03-2018  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** transport infrastructure | third country | EU strategy | maritime transport | multilateral relations | China

**Summary**  
Five years since China launched its 21st Century Maritime Silk Road initiative, with the aim of improving its maritime links – on its own terms – with south-east and south Asia, east Africa and ultimately Europe, the country has made significant progress in gaining long-term control over strategic overseas ports. Moreover, the state-driven merger of two giant state-owned shipping conglomerates, China Shipping and China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) in 2016, and the subsequent debt-financed takeover of rival Orient Overseas, have brought China closer to global leadership in container lines, with it now in third place. China’s massive push for the construction of large-scale, high-risk and debt-financed infrastructure along the Maritime Silk Road has raised concerns about white elephants being built, and host countries becoming overburdened from servicing their debts to China. The large numbers of such projects has seen some host countries forced to repay their loans by handing over the operation of strategic assets to China for decades ahead. Their experience suggests that, while host countries may never see the much touted ‘win-win’ results of these projects, China may be poised for double wins from them. Among the requirements applicable to securing loans for Chinese-funded projects is that engineering contracts be awarded directly to Chinese firms without public tender. While this requirement practically excludes other countries’ contractors from participation, it also challenges China’s repeated rhetoric that its initiative is open to third-party participation. In recent years, China has made major inroads into the EU by acquiring minority or majority stakes in port infrastructure of strategic relevance for China. Hence, China is increasingly able to shape outcomes in its interest from within the EU.

Briefing  EN
International Agreements - A Rolling Check-List

Publication type Study
Date 09-03-2018
Author Milan REMAC


Keyword third country | statistics | international agreement | European Parliament | interinstitutional agreement | Treaty on the Functioning of the EU

Summary This rolling check-list offers an implementation monitoring tool that allows for a systematic overview of the review and monitoring clauses, sunset clauses and also management and implementation clauses that are included in international agreements concluded between the EU and third countries. It is produced by the Ex-Post Evaluation Unit of the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), the European Parliament's in-house research service and think-tank, as part of its work on the evaluation of the EU policy cycle.

Study EN

Stronger Bacteria, Weaker Antimicrobial, The fight against antimicrobial resistance in Europe through research, and the Andalusian PIRASOA program. Two examples of examples of success still to be completed

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 11-01-2018
External author José Miguel Cisneros

Policy area Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Public Health

Keyword public-private partnership | research programme | antimicrobial resistance | health care system | public health | case study | Andalusia | drug surveillance | pharmacology

Summary The research is the key to the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance, but funding against the AMR in Europe is not acceptable because of the magnitude of the health problem. In this context, in Andalusia (Spain), the PIRASOA Programme has been successfully implemented and developed, integrated into the daily clinical practice. The preliminary outcomes show a reduction of antimicrobial consumption and antimicrobial resistance and an improvement of antimicrobial prescription profile and. However, it is necessary to maintain professional motivation and more technical and human resources.

In-Depth Analysis EN

Gulf countries, Iran, Iraq and Yemen

Publication type EU Fact Sheets
Date 01-01-2018
Author WALTER MASUR | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ | Roberto BENDINI

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Summary The EU has cooperation agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council (a regional organisation grouping Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) and with Yemen, and a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq. Currently, the EU has no contractual relations with Iran and there is no EU delegation in Tehran.

EU Fact Sheets BG, ES, CS, DA, DE, ET, EL, EN, FR, GA, HR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SL, FI, SV

South Asia

Publication type EU Fact Sheets
Date 01-01-2018
Author WALTER MASUR | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Summary As the world’s largest and most populous continent, Asia is of great geostrategic importance to the EU, which is forging closer ties with countries in South Asia as a strong economic player and a major development and aid donor. The EU is working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights, while it also has security concerns in the region, notably the Kashmir conflict and Afghanistan. The European Parliament is monitoring the situation in South Asia and has supported the EU’s assistance for addressing the COVID-19 crisis and its impact in the region, with targeted support for the most vulnerable population groups.

EU Fact Sheets BG, ES, CS, DA, DE, ET, EL, EN, FR, GA, HR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SL, FI, SV
East Asia

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets  
Date: 01-01-2018  
Author: Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ | STEFANIA GAZZINA | Samuel CANTELL  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Summary: Asia is the world’s largest and most populous continent and is of great geostrategic importance to the EU, with three strategic partners in East Asia: China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. East Asia faces security concerns such as the nuclear challenge in North Korea and the maritime disputes in the East and the South China Seas. The EU is a strong economic player and major aid and development donor, working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights.

Southeast Asia

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets  
Date: 01-01-2018  
Author: ANDREAS STRIEGNITZ | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Summary: The EU is forging closer ties with Southeast Asian countries and is promoting regional integration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The EU is a strong economic player in Southeast Asia and an important development aid donor, working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights. The EU has geostrategic concerns in the region, such as the South China Sea dispute, and environmental concerns in the Mekong sub-region. The EU has mobilised a ‘Team Europe’ package of over EUR 800 million to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in the region and to mitigate its socio-economic impact.

Pacific

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets  
Date: 01-01-2018  
Author: KAHRAMAN EVSEN  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Summary: The EU’s relationship with the Pacific region has political, economic and development dimensions. The EU is the Pacific region’s second largest trading partner and in June 2018 negotiations were launched for comprehensive free trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand. The EU has a partnership with the 15 Pacific Independent Island Countries that centres on development, fisheries and climate change, as well as partnerships with the three Pacific Overseas Countries and Territories and the Pacific Islands Forum.

The situation of indigenous children with disabilities

Publication type: Study  
Date: 18-12-2017  
External author: Isabel Inguanzo  
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights  
Keyword: the EU’s international role | data collection | child protection | indigenous population | Kenya | children’s rights | human rights | UN convention | right to physical integrity | discrimination based on disability | development aid | right to education | Brazil | Nepal | integration of the disabled  
Summary: Indigenous children with disabilities (ICwD) have received little attention in academic research and development policies. However, they face discrimination at many levels, based on ethnicity, age, ability and gender and this often leads to serious human rights violations. The lack of data, both on the prevalence of disabilities among indigenous children and young people and on specific violations of their human rights, is a serious constraint to any policy intended to respect, protect and promote their human rights. This study seeks to identify these gaps, point to certain patterns and recommend ways of improving data collection and the situation of ICwD in future.

Study EN
What next after the US withdrawal from the TPP? What are the options for trade relations in the Pacific and what will be the impact on the EU?

Publication type: Study
Date: 27-11-2017
External author: Peter CHASE, Pasha L. HSIEH, Bart KERREMANS
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance
Keyword: common commercial policy | trade by country | United States | free-trade agreement | Asia | withdrawal from an agreement | Canada | Chile | New Zealand | economic consequence | Mexico | Australia | Peru | trade policy | geopolitics | globalisation
Summary: The Trans-Pacific Partnership was a landmark trade agreement signed by 12 Pacific Rim countries including the US on 4 February 2016. TPP had commercial as well as geopolitical significance for the Obama administration and was a key component of the former president’s so-called “pivot” to Asia. On his first full day in office, on 24 January 2017, President Trump pulled the US out of TPP leaving the other 11 signatories to grapple with the consequences. They have since vowed to move forward even without US participation, reviewing the existing clauses and rebranding the regional agreement under the name of Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Negotiations on the CPTPP will continue in 2018. The European Parliament has requested three experts from the EU, US and Asia to consider the implications of the US withdrawal from the TPP and draw conclusions on how the EU should position itself in this high-growth and geopolitically-strategic area. The findings were presented during a Workshop organised by the Policy Department for the International Trade Committee on 8 November 2017 in Brussels.

Study

Violence against women and the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-11-2017
External author: Athena CHRISTOFI, Elena FRIES-TERSCH, Nathalie MEURENS, Catarina MONTEIRO, Sophie MOREL, Hana SPANIKOVA, Milieu.
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Culture | Public international law | Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | Education | Public Health | Human Rights
Keyword: sexual discrimination | fight against crime | European convention | domestic violence | help for victims | EU law | women’s rights | civil society | human rights
Summary: This study was commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the FEMM Committee. This study has three main objectives: 1) providing an overview of the progress made by EU Member States in the area of violence against women; 2) presenting the state of play of the ratification or implementation of the Istanbul Convention by Member States; and 3) analysing the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention and its consequences. The study concludes with policy recommendations on the role of the European Parliament in monitoring the process of implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

Study

Hong Kong’s Legislative Council and the rule of law

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 10-11-2017
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: European External Action Service | Hong Kong | freedom of expression | interpretation of the law | freedom of self-determination | China | Amnesty International | regional election | authoritarian regime | election result | civil society | rule of law
Summary: Hong Kong 'localists' won six seats in the 2016 Legislative Council elections. Calling for greater autonomy or self-determination for Hong Kong, or even its independence from mainland China, they have challenged the fragile balance of power under the city’s 1997 ‘one country, two systems' regime. The attempts of the now ousted members-elect to cross Beijing's bottom line has prompted mainland China to tighten its grip on the city's executive, legislature and judiciary, adding to concerns over creeping erosion of the rights and freedoms guaranteed by Hong Kong's Basic Law.

At a Glance

FTA talks with Australia and New Zealand

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 23-10-2017
Author: Krisztina BINDER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | New Zealand | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Australia | free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | market access
Summary: On 13 September 2017, the Commission presented recommendations to the Council to authorise the launch of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with Australia and New Zealand. In October, the Parliament is due to debate reports by the Parliament's Committee on International Trade (INTA) on the proposed negotiating mandate for trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand.

At a Glance

ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL
Multimedia
**International Agreements in Progress: EU-New Zealand free trade agreement - All set for the launch of negotiations**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 11-10-2017  
**Author** Krisztina BINDER  
**Policy area** International Trade  
**Keyword** New Zealand | dairy industry | statistics | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | mutual recognition principle | free-trade agreement | bilateral agreement | service industry | agricultural market | international trade | small and medium-sized enterprises  
**Summary** New Zealand already enjoys a number of bilateral trade cooperation agreements with the EU. These agreements pave the way for negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA) between the EU and New Zealand. However, both sides are expected to raise several sensitive issues during negotiations, not least because New Zealand is a major and competitive producer and exporter of agricultural goods. The EU is committed to taking European agricultural sensibilities fully into consideration in its negotiating strategy, seeking to protect vulnerable sectors through specific provisions. In addition to facilitating trade and investment flows between the parties, the FTA would create a level playing field for the EU with other trading partners that have already concluded FTAs with New Zealand. The FTA would also strengthen the EU's position in Asia-Pacific value chains, and help to advance the trade policy interests of the EU in the region. On 13 September 2017, the European Commission presented draft negotiating directives for an FTA with New Zealand. This draft mandate, in line with the EU Court of Justice's recent opinion on the EU-Singapore FTA, covers only areas falling under the EU's exclusive competence. Therefore, the prospective agreement could be concluded by the EU on its own and could be ratified at EU level only. The Commission aims to finalise the negotiations before the end of its mandate in late 2019.

**Briefing** EN

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**International Agreements in Progress: EU-Australia free trade agreement - Moving towards the launch of talks**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 11-10-2017  
**Author** Krisztina BINDER  
**Policy area** International Trade  
**Keyword** impact study | statistics | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Australia | mutual recognition principle | free-trade agreement | bilateral agreement | agricultural market | agricultural trade | meat product | international trade  
**Summary** The prospective EU-Australia free trade agreement (FTA) will complement the economic dimension of the current longstanding and evolving relationship with a new element. In addition to opening up new bilateral commercial opportunities, the FTA would also facilitate the creation of new ties with global production and commercial networks and help to advance the trade policy interests of the EU in the Asia-Pacific region. The economic cooperation already in place includes a number of bilateral agreements that provide a good basis for the future negotiations. However, given that Australia is a major agricultural and agri-food exporter globally, it is expected that, in the course of the negotiations, certain sensitive issues may be raised. The EU is committed to taking European agricultural sensibilities fully into consideration in its negotiating strategy, seeking to protect vulnerable sectors through specific provisions. On 13 September 2017, the European Commission presented the draft negotiating directives for the FTA with Australia. This draft mandate, in line with the EU Court of Justice's recent opinion on the EU-Singapore FTA, covers only those areas falling under the EU’s exclusive competence. Therefore, the prospective agreement could be concluded by the EU on its own and could be ratified at EU level only. The Commission aims to finalise the negotiations before the end of its mandate in late 2019.

**Briefing** EN

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**Russian ties with China in the face of Western sanctions**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 16-10-2017  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** third country | United States | Syria | multilateral relations | Ukraine | international conflict | China | North Korea | energy policy | Georgia | international sanctions | Russia | military cooperation | occupied territory | international trade  
**Summary** Since the West imposed sanctions on Russia, in response to its annexation of Crimea and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine in 2014, the country has accelerated its ‘turn to the East’ and notably to like-minded China, in an attempt to offset its loss of access to Western financial markets and advanced technology. Three years on, the economic outcomes appear to have fallen largely short of Russia’s high expectations. The most visible signs of the incremental Sino-Russian economic rapprochement have been long-term and large-scale deals orchestrated by the two countries’ top leaderships in a number of state-controlled strategic sectors. Politically, these highly publicised agreements were meant to signal to the West that Russia under sanctions had ample other options. Economically, the jury is still out on whether they will be beneficial for Russia in the long run, since it has had to make major conlovations to China. The asymmetry of their relationship has thus become further entrenched, although appearances may suggest otherwise. Moreover, the state-led deals have so far failed to generate major spill-over effects to other less state-dominated sectors. China and Russia pursue two competing concepts of regional integration for Eurasia – the China-initiated Silk Road Economic Belt and the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union – which experts consider incompatible. It remains to be seen what form, if any, their envisaged coordination will take, and how this will reshape the economic order in the EU’s neighbourhood. Closer Sino-Russian strategic alignment on global governance issues – despite its limits – is likely to diminish the space for governance concepts developed by Western liberal democracies and the core values associated with them.

**Briefing** EN
South Korea: Economic indicators and trade with EU
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 18-09-2017
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO | Giulio SABBATI
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: trade by country | foreign investment | South Korea | employment statistics | import (EU) | economic statistics | export (EU) | public finance | gross domestic product | corruption | socioeconomic conditions
Summary: South Korea is one of the top countries in terms of doing business and holds a good score within the Human Development Index. Meanwhile its economy has slowed in recent years and female labour market participation remains lower than most OECD countries, with little progress. Trade with the EU has benefitted from 2011 bilateral Free Trade Agreement, namely making a boost in EU's exports to South Korea.

Plight of the Rohingya minority in Myanmar/Burma
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 15-09-2017
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: aid to refugees | military regime | stateless person | the EU's international role | ethnic discrimination | Burma/Myanmar | Muslim | religious discrimination | ethnic cleansing | protection of minorities | repression | human rights
Summary: The brutal military crackdown since October 2016 in Myanmar/Burma's Rakhine State has highlighted the tragic situation of Muslim Rohingya, often described as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. Deprived of citizenship and basic freedoms at home, those who risk their lives to escape can at best hope for a precarious existence abroad. This text updates an earlier 'at a glance note', published in February 2017 - PE 599.257.

Research for REGI Committee - European Cohesion Policy and regional development policies in other parts of the world
Publication type: Study
Date: 15-09-2017
External author: ISMERI EUROPA: Enrico WOLLEB, Andrea NALDINI, Andrea CIFFOLILLI; UNIVERSITY OF PARMA: Guglielmo WOLLEB, Alessandro DARAIO
Policy area: European Added Value | Global Governance | Regional Development
Keyword: third country | comparative analysis | economic and social cohesion | EU Member State | development aid | regional policy | EU programme
Summary: The study compares regional policies of China, Brazil, ASEAN and MERCOSUR with the EU's Cohesion Policy to inspire the policy debate on its future after 2020. Despite the fact that these countries differ significantly from the EU, they attach great importance to territorial policies and provide useful suggestions. Strategic priorities are supported by flexible territorial concentration and competition rules in their regional policies, and cooperation among regions and administrative capacity building are key components of policy implementation.

North Korea: Possible scenarios
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 12-09-2017
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: North Korea | South Korea | military intervention | nuclear weapon | international sanctions | international negotiations | dictatorship | China
Summary: On 3 September 2017, North Korea conducted a sixth nuclear test, its most powerful yet, claiming to have successfully tested a miniaturised hydrogen bomb that would fit in an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). The North Korean crisis, which has a long history, has now the potential to develop into a large-scale conflict affecting a large variety of actors across the globe. Pyongyang has become a global threat combining increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons and missiles programmes that could strike the USA and even Europe. This has been made possible by the international community's lack of a common strategy and Chinese support for the North Korean regime. As the international community tries to resolve the current crisis, analysts have identified a number of possible scenarios: reinforcing international sanctions to push Pyongyang to the table to negotiate an agreement to renounce its nuclear programme in exchange for economic support and a guarantee of not being attacked; performing a pre-emptive strike against its nuclear sites, undergoing the risk of retaliation against Seoul; and assenting to North Korea's demand to be recognised as a de facto nuclear power and to conclude the peace treaty that was never signed at the end of the 1950-1953 Korean War ─ which ultimately is Kim's real goal and the reason for this escalation.
India and prospects for closer EU ties

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-09-2017
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO

Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Pakistan | third country | EU investment | India | bilateral relations | multilateral relations | secular State | protection of minorities | trade agreement | summit meeting | China | human rights

Summary: The EU and India – two multicultural democracies with a constitutional structure containing elements of federalism – potentially have much in common. However, they face different geopolitical concerns; the fact that each party's attention is focused on its own neighbours (in the case of New Delhi, this translates into a 'Chinese obsession'), has prevented them from developing the strategic partnership they had agreed upon in 2004. The stalemate in negotiations for a free trade agreement, which started in 2007 and reached deadlock in 2013, has also hindered progress towards closer relations. In India, although the EU does not get much media coverage, it is generally viewed positively. Both the Indian leadership and the general public have a stronger perception of individual Member States than of the EU as an entity, whereas the Indian elite is more aware of the European Union. Several Indian observers regret the EU's attitude of 'preaching and finger pointing'. Even though the latest EU-India Summit held in 2016 did not succeed in making a breakthrough in the negotiations for a free trade agreement, it endorsed the EU-India Agenda for Action 2020 as a common roadmap aimed at reviving the strategic partnership between the two parties. While waiting for economic relations to develop further, the two could focus on other possible areas of cooperation such as maritime security and coordination of activities in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

Global Trendometer: Essays on medium- and long-term global trends - Summer 2017

Publication type: Study
Date: 06-09-2017
Author: EAMONN NOONAN | Daniele RECHARD | Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI | Jessica Freya WINdle-WEHRLE | Agnieszka WIDUTO | Anne ALTmAYER

Keyword: demography | sub-Saharan Africa | water management | construction equipment | middle class | multilateral relations | protectionism | raw material | economic analysis | China | redistribution of income | equal treatment | international trade | tax system

Summary: With the publication of the "Global Trendometer" the EPRS Global Trends Unit seeks to contribute to the process of identifying and addressing medium- and long-term trends, and their possible implications for policy-making in the European Union. In this latest edition, three essays and seven two-page vignettes on different geopolitical, economic, technological and social issues paint a broad-ranging picture of some developments that may shape Europe's future.

Gulf Countries, Iran, Iraq and Yemen

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets
Date: 01-09-2017
Author: Fernando GARCES DE LOS FAYOS TournAN | Kirsten JONGBERG

Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: energy cooperation | EP delegation | interparliamentary relations | trade relations | cooperation agreement (EU) | Gulf Cooperation Council | economic relations | Middle East | human rights

Summary: The EU has Cooperation Agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council (a regional organisation grouping Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), and with Yemen, and a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq. Currently, the EU has no contractual relations with Iran but recognises that there is great potential for deeper relations.

Pacific

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets
Date: 01-09-2017
Author: Anna SAARELA

Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: development policy | overseas countries and territories | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | climate change policy | Oceania | Pacific Islands Forum | Cotonou Agreement | trade agreement (EU) | trade relations | cooperation agreement (EU)

Summary: The EU is the Pacific region's fourth trading partner, although the volume of trade is small in both absolute and relative terms. The EU is currently preparing to negotiate free trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand, which are important trading partners, and has a partnership with the 15 Pacific Independent Island Countries (PICTs), focused on development, fisheries and climate change, as well as partnerships with the four Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).
Research for PECH Committee - Fisheries in Japan

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-08-2017
Author: Priit OJAMAA | Carmen-Paz MARTI DOMINGUEZ | MATILDE VALLERANI
Policy area: Fisheries
Keyword: administrative structures | maritime law | marine ecosystem | fishing fleet | catch of fish | Japan | fishery management | fishing industry
Summary: The present note was requested by the Committee on Fisheries of the European Parliament for its Delegation to Japan (18-22 September 2017). The note provides a review of the main characteristics and specificities of Japan fisheries sector and related activities. It provides an overview of issues such as the legal and institutional framework, fisheries management, catches, the fishing fleet, fishing industry, trade, employment, the fish market and marine research.

International Agreements in Progress: EU-Japan free trade agreement within reach

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-07-2017
Author: Krisztina Binder
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: impact study | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | free-trade agreement | Japan | bilateral relations | powers of the institutions (EU) | international trade | EU institution
Summary: Negotiations on an EU-Japan free trade agreement (FTA) were officially launched in March 2013. Following 18 rounds of negotiations and a number of meetings at the technical and political levels, a political agreement in principle was reached during the 24th EU-Japan Summit in Brussels, on 6 July 2017. Negotiations on the outstanding issues that were left on the table will continue, with the aim of finalising the text of the agreement by the end of 2017. The deal with Japan, the EU's second largest trading partner in Asia, will enhance trade and investment relationships between the two parties. European companies, in the agri-food sector for instance, will benefit from improved access to the Japanese market, mainly through the reduction both of tariffs on specific goods as well as existing regulatory and non-tariff barriers. The 2016 trade sustainability impact assessment for the EU-Japan FTA indicated that the EU-Japan FTA and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement, involving the EU and the USA, would result in similar levels of economic gains for Europe. According to recent Commission estimates, European companies will save up to €1 billion in customs duties per year as a result of the EU-Japan FTA. Moreover, the value of EU goods and services exports could rise by up to €20 billion. This briefing is an update of an earlier version, of October 2016: PE 589.828.

Openness of public procurement markets in key third countries

Publication type: Study
Date: 04-07-2017
External author: Kamala Dawar, Sussex University, United Kingdom
Policy area: International Trade | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Internal Market and Customs Union | Contract Law, Commercial Law and Company Law | Regional Development
Keyword: common commercial policy | public contract | United States | comparative law | trade restriction | liberalisation of trade | India | Japan | protectionism | market access | China | Brazil | EU market
Summary: This report assesses the openness of public procurement markets in key third countries of interest to the EU. It provides a comparative overview of the regulatory and market access characteristics of the US, Brazil, India, China, Japan's procurement markets, with reference to the procurement regulation and enforcement within the EU. The report assesses the available data on both the de jure and de facto levels of openness of these markets to put forward some conclusions of value to policy making both within the EU and in its trading relations with key third countries. This assessment concludes that the lack of comprehensive comparable data on procurement contract awards, particularly at the sub-central level, is not a trivial challenge for policy makers. Nevertheless, it is evident that the liberalisation of procurement markets continues to take place on a strictly reciprocal basis – linked to the offensive interests of governments. Given the slow-down in negotiating mega-regional agreements with comprehensive procurement chapters, the WTO Government Procurement Agreement remains the most efficient and transparent forum for undertaking further liberalisation in public procurement.
In Pursuit of an International Investment Court. Recently Negotiated Investment Chapters in EU Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements in Comparative Perspective

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 04-07-2017  
**External author**  Prof. Dr. Steffen HINDELANG, LL.M., Department of Law, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany and Ass. iur. Teoman M. HAGEMEYER, Dipl. iur. oec., Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Law, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany  
**Policy area** International Trade  
**Keyword** comparative law | access to information | free-trade agreement | judge | investment protection | European Court of Human Rights | appeal | comparative study | court of arbitration | Canada | Court of Justice of the European Union | judicial proceedings | Singapore | trade agreement (EU) | Vietnam  
**Summary** The study compares the revised and signed text of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EUVFTA) and the EU Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) in respect of important procedural aspects relating to investor State dispute settlement. The findings are juxtaposed to the procedural rules governing the preliminary reference procedure and direct action (action for annulment) before the Court of Justice of the European Union as well as the individual application before the European Court of Human Rights. In doing so, it provides a tool and manual to evaluate the EU's today's and future progress in reforming the international investment law regime. By outlining key features of the procedural frameworks governing two international courts, some 'tried and tested' concepts as source of inspiration for the possible design of a 'multilateral investment court' might be found.

**Study**  EN

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**East Asia**

**Publication type** EU Fact Sheets  
**Date** 01-07-2017  
**Author** Anna SAARELA | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** common commercial policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | North Korea | South Korea | Japan | Taiwan | trade relations | trading operation | common foreign and security policy | China | human rights  
**Summary** Asia is the world's largest and most populous continent, and of great geostrategic importance to the EU. The EU has three strategic partners in East Asia: China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. It faces security concerns in the region, such as the nuclear challenge in North Korea and the disputed South China Sea. The EU is a strong economic player and major aid and development donor, working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights.

**EU Fact Sheets** BG, ES, CS, DA, DE, ET, EL, EN, FR, HR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SL, FI, SV

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**De jure versus de facto labour rights in China**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 20-06-2017  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Employment | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** collective bargaining | labour tribunal | labour law | access to the courts | employment policy | international law - national law | working conditions | trade union freedom | international labour law | economic reform | international competition | China  
**Summary** For China, striking the right balance between using its abundant, cheap workforce as a competitive advantage and protecting labour rights has been a major challenge. Although China has developed a considerable body of law governing labour relations, there is still a huge gap between the labour rights on the statute books and those enjoyed by workers in practice. Over-riding economic interests to attract foreign investors and to boost economic growth have seriously undermined effective labour rights enforcement. China's vanishing demographic dividend may require a new balance.

**At a Glance**  EN
International Agreements in Progress: EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement - Stimulus for negotiations in the region

Publication type  Briefing
Date  15-06-2017
Author  Krisztina BINDER
Policy area  International Trade
Keyword  free-trade agreement | bilateral agreement | Singapore | case law (EU) | Court of Justice of the European Union | European Union
Summary  Singapore is the first member country of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and second Asian economy after South Korea to have concluded a free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU, in October 2014. Moreover, this is the first comprehensive FTA negotiated and finalised by the EU after the Treaty of Lisbon came into effect. As a 'new generation' trade agreement, the EU-Singapore FTA (EUSFTA) in many aspects goes further than current World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments. Moreover, not only does the agreement provide improved access to the Singaporean market, it is also beneficial for European companies operating from Singapore across the Southeast Asian region. Following the conclusion of the EUSFTA negotiations, the Commission sought an opinion from the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) on the allocation of competences between the EU and the Member States. On 16 May 2017, the CJEU issued its opinion, stating that the EUSFTA also covers shared competences. As the EUSFTA is considered a model for successive new generation EU FTAs, the CJEU's opinion is extremely relevant for all ongoing FTA negotiations and pending agreements.

Study in focus: Review of EU-third country cooperation on policies falling within the ITRE domain in relation to Brexit

Publication type  Briefing
Date  15-06-2017
External author  J. Scott MARCUS, Georgios PETROPOULOS, André SAPIR, Simone TAGLIAPIETRA, Alessio TERZI, Reinhilde VEUGELERS, Georg ZACHMANN
Policy area  International Trade | Transposition and Implementation of Law | Energy | Internal Market and Customs Union | Industry
Keyword  third country | energy cooperation | energy research | United Kingdom | free-trade agreement | European Economic Area | bilateral agreement | Framework Programme for Research and Development | EU research policy | withdrawal from the EU | EFTA
Summary  The study provides a critical assessment of the implications of existing models of cooperation of third countries with the European Union in each of four thematic areas for which the ITRE is responsible (energy, electronic communications, research policy, and small business policy). This briefing provides short summary of this study. Link to the original publication: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/602057/IPOL_STU(2017)602057_EN.pdf

Labour rights in Export Processing Zones with a focus on GSP+ beneficiary countries

Publication type  Study
Date  15-06-2017
External author  Benjamin RICHARDSON, James HARRISON and Liam CAMPLING
Policy area  International Trade | Transposition and Implementation of Law | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Human Rights
Keyword  common commercial policy | Pakistan | collective bargaining | labour law | generalised preferences | corporate social responsibility | the EU’s international role | industrial free zone | working conditions | clothing industry | Philippines | Mongolia | social clause | international labour law | fishing industry | trade union freedom | Sri Lanka | gender mainstreaming
Summary  The European Union’s GSP+ scheme provides trade concessions to beneficiary countries and obliges them to ratify and effectively implement key international conventions on human rights and labour rights. The sectoral gains of GSP+ have thus far been concentrated on exports of apparel, textiles and processed fish. Such sectors are often located in Export Processing Zones (EPZs) where the governance of labour rights may differ from the rest of the country and fall below international legal standards. This study examines the apparel sectors of Pakistan, Mongolia and Sri Lanka and the processed fish sector of the Philippines. The importance of EPZs to exports under the GSP+ varies by country and sector. Only in Pakistan are EPZs legally exempt from rights relating to freedom of association and collective bargaining. But restrictions on these and other rights in practice remain widespread, and are not confined to EPZs. Efforts to promote labour rights through the GSP+ should focus on key export sectors benefitting from the scheme and consider EPZs alongside other sites of the supply chain where exploited workers are based.

Source : © European Union, 2021 - EP
Review of EU-third country cooperation on policies falling within the ITRE domain in relation to Brexit

Publication type Study
Date 15-06-2017
External author J. Scott MARCUS, Georgios PETROPOULOS, André SAPIR, Simone TAGLIAPIETRA, Alessio TERZI, Reinhilde VEUGELERS, Georg ZACHMANN
Policy area Research Policy | International Trade | Transposition and Implementation of Law | Energy | Internal Market and Customs Union | Industry
Keyword third country | United Kingdom | free-trade agreement | European Economic Area | renewable energy | bilateral relations | Framework Programme for Research and Development | small and medium-sized enterprises | EP Committee | climate change policy | energy policy | EFTA countries | withdrawal from the EU
Summary This study was prepared at the request of the European Parliament’s Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE). It provides a critical assessment of the implications of existing models of cooperation of third countries with the European Union in each of four thematic areas for which the ITRE is responsible (energy, electronic communications, research policy, and small business policy. The relative desirability to the EU of EEA membership, bilateral relationships (as with Switzerland), a new generation Free Trade Agreement (FTA), membership in the Energy Community, or participation in the Horizon 2020 or COSME programmes are considered.

China's role in Central Asia

Publication type At a Glance
Date 07-06-2017
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword Central Asia | trade by country | terrorism | Russia | economic cooperation | military cooperation | foreign policy | geopolitics | China
Summary Since 2013, China's growing trade and investment in Central Asia have been boosted by its ambitious 'One Belt, One Road' project. However, China only has limited security involvement and soft power in the region, and it is not challenging Russian supremacy there for the time being.

South Asia

Publication type EU Fact Sheets
Date 01-06-2017
Author Anna SAARELA | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ | Fernando GARCES DE LOS FAYOS TOURNAN
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | development policy | Afghanistan | Pakistan | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation | EU relations | political situation | cooperation policy | India | common foreign and security policy | Sri Lanka | human rights
Summary Asia is the world’s largest and most populous continent, of great geostrategic importance to the EU. The EU is forging closer ties with countries in South Asia. India is now a strategic partner of the EU. The EU has security concerns in the region, such as the Kashmir conflict and Afghanistan. The EU is a strong economic player and major development and aid donor, working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights.

Southeast Asia

Publication type EU Fact Sheets
Date 01-06-2017
Author Anna SAARELA | Jorge SOUTULLO SANCHEZ
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword South-East Asia | common commercial policy | development policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | trade relations | cooperation agreement (EU) | common foreign and security policy | ASEAN | human rights
Summary Asia is the world’s largest and most populous continent, of great geostrategic importance to the EU. In Southeast Asia, ASEAN and ASEM are important interlocutors for the EU and the EU is forging closer ties with countries across the region. The EU is a strong economic player and important development and aid donor, working to foster institution-building, democracy, good governance and human rights.
**India and challenges ahead in the Indo-Pacific region: Opportunities for cooperation with the EU**

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 30-05-2017  
**Author**: Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: climate change | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | the EU's international role | Pacific Ocean | transport safety | free-trade agreement | maritime transport | India | bilateral relations | Indian Ocean | renewable energy | China  
**Summary**: Lying in the middle of the Indian Ocean, India relies heavily on the ocean for its energy and trade, but also faces both conventional and non-conventional security challenges which the ocean presents. At the same time, its operational theatre is widening to include a bigger geopolitical region: the Indo-Pacific, including the South China Sea. Alongside this broadening horizon, India needs to reckon with an emerging actor China. Not only has Beijing's military presence in the Indian Ocean increased considerably, but it has been planning naval bases and civilian port infrastructure in a region in which India has traditionally enjoyed maritime prominence. China's 'string of pearls' strategy has left New Delhi feeling 'encircled'. Major efforts to modernise the Indian Navy and to enhance cooperation and alliances in the region suggest that India is taking the challenge seriously. However, missing from this framework are a comprehensive maritime policy, a single body in charge of coordinating Indian maritime policies and interests, and a more developed shipbuilding sector. Besides, there is no effective agreement or mechanism for multilateral cooperation on maritime security in the Indian Ocean. Since 2008, the EU has been a successful net security provider in the western part of the Indo-Pacific region through its Operation Atalanta / EU NAVFOR Somalia anti-piracy deployment. Adopted in 2014, the EU's new maritime security strategy offers opportunities to further develop its cooperation with India on maritime issues and in particular on non-conventional security issues, in order to upgrade bilateral relations.

**CJEU Opinion on the EU-Singapore Agreement**

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 29-05-2017  
**Author**: Laura PUCCIO  
**Policy area**: International Trade  
**Keyword**: common commercial policy | external competence (EU) | interpretation of the law | ratification of an agreement | joint competence | Singapore | investment protection | opinion of the Court of Justice (EU) | trade agreement (EU)  
**Summary**: In 2015, the European Commission requested the opinion of the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) on the competence for conclusion of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA). The CJEU issued its opinion on 16 May 2017, holding that the EUSFTA covers shared competences with respect to: (i) non-direct foreign investment, (ii) investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), and (iii) state-to-state dispute settlement relating to provisions regarding portfolio investment and ISDS. In its current form, therefore, the agreement would need to be concluded as a 'mixed agreement'.

**EU-South Korea free trade agreement**

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 10-05-2017  
**Author**: Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: common commercial policy | trade statistics | South Korea | import (EU) | free-trade agreement | export (EU) | investment protection | trade agreement (EU) | trade volume  
**Summary**: The EU-South Korea free trade agreement (FTA), applied since July 2011, entered into force in December 2015. The agreement has successfully boosted EU-Korea trade exchange. The European Parliament is due to adopt a report on the five years of the FTA's implementation in May 2017.

**South Korea’s presidential election: Potential for a new EU role in the Korean Peninsula**

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 08-05-2017  
**Author**: Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: regional security | North Korea | South Korea | EU relations | political morality | candidate | political situation | business ethics | foreign policy | presidential election | economic situation  
**Summary**: South Korea has been shaken by a succession of corruption scandals involving politicians, judges, senior officials, businessmen and even academics. Impeachment of the country's first female president, the conservative Park Guen-hye, was confirmed by the Constitutional Court, and snap Presidential elections take place on 9 May 2017. Moon Jae-in, a liberal politician and a leading Minjoo (Democratic Party) personality, leads the polls and is the prospective next President of South Korea. Whoever will run the country is expected to launch an era of political and constitutional reform, as well as reducing the power of the chaebol, business conglomerates which enjoy outsized influence and impunity. Moon and the Minjoo are critical of deployment of the US-developed anti-missile shield, Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD). A new direction to relations with North Korea is also expected, with a shift from military deterrence to an engagement attitude. This new course could favour stability in the region, paving the way for a new role for the European Union, which could offer its experience in dialogue and integration to engage in a possible future denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

**Source**: © European Union, 2021 - EP
Transformation of China and global economic interdependence

Publication type: Study
Date: 26-04-2017
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: China | Institutional framework | global economic interdependence | Tax evasion | Money laundering | Tax transparency | EU Overseas Countries and Territories

Summary:
China is a natural strategic partner for the EU, despite fundamental divergences in some areas, mostly related to state intervention, both in economic and social affairs. Due to growing tensions and geopolitical unpredictability, there is a window of opportunity to develop closer ties between the EU and China. The partnership offers mutually beneficial opportunities, such as comprehensive agreements on investment and on the protection of geographical indications; aviation and maritime cooperation; and dialogues on human rights and legal affairs. China is navigating a crucial but complex transformation towards more sustainable growth by rebalancing from investment to consumption and from manufacturing to services. Overall, this transition is expected to benefit both China and the world as a whole. Due to economic interdependence, it is also likely to produce certain spill-over effects that will vary by country and by region. Global integration is fundamental for all economies and no one has an interest in a trade war or protectionism. Maintaining public ownership as the mainstay of the Chinese economy is not sustainable. Reforms are needed to tackle the root causes of overcapacity in various industrial sectors and the role of state owned enterprises. Domestic concerns, such as lifting millions of people out of poverty and reducing ever-growing income inequalities as well as endemic corruption, need to be addressed. China now plays a crucial role in global governance, the rules-based international order and meeting commitments made in the G20 framework — achieving ‘major country’ status comes with responsibilities. Beijing has demonstrated some movement in shifting away from the pursuit of narrow national aims towards a more active foreign and security policy and increased global financial, economic and peace cooperation. At the same time, China has been increasingly assertive in its Asian neighbourhood and it has called for restraint from all sides to prevent rapidly escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula from turning into a disastrous conflict.

Study: DE, EN, FR, IT

Tax evasion, money laundering and tax transparency in the EU Overseas Countries and Territories: Ex-Post Impact Assessment

Publication type: Study
Date: 20-04-2017
Author: Jan Mikolaj TYMOWSKI | Isabelle IOANNIDES
External author: Prof. Alexandre Maitrot de la Motte of the University of Paris-Est Creteil, Prof. Dr H.E. Bröning, Prof. Dr O.O. Cherednichenko, Prof. Dr H.G. Hoogers and G. Karapetian LL.M. (Department of Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Public Administration/Groningen Centre for European Financial Services Law (GCEFSL), University of Groningen), Dr Peter Clegg of the University of the West of England
Keyword: Greenland | United Kingdom OCT | French overseas collectivity | institutional structure | French overseas department and region | overseas countries and territories | application of EU law | tax evasion | Netherlands OCT | European tax cooperation | exchange of information | money laundering | tax authorities | tax avoidance

Summary:
This study aims to present the legal, political and institutional framework governing offshore practices in the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) of the European Union, which are under the sovereignty of four Member States: Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The institutional arrangements of the OCTs with the relevant EU Member States directly affect the possibility to establish policies and adopt regulations, including on taxation and money laundering. Regardless of the level of control of the EU Member States over their OCTs, implementation of the law by the local authorities is of concern in a number of the UK and Dutch OCTs, both in terms of structural weaknesses, but also because of limited financial and human resources. In the case of the French OCTs, suboptimal oversight controls and lack of information make it difficult to supervise financial activities. The opening analysis compares the French, Dutch and British cases in terms of combating tax evasion, money laundering and enhancing tax transparency; explores the case of Greenland; and draws conclusions on how the EU could better use its leverage in these overseas territories. The analysis is based on the detailed annexed contributions, written by external experts, which cover in detail the OCTs under French, Dutch, and British rule. This ex-post impact assessment has been produced by the European Parliamentary Research Service at the request of the European Parliament’s Committee of Inquiry into Money Laundering, Tax Avoidance and Tax Evasion (PANA) to assist it in the context of its ongoing work.

Study: DE, EN, FR
Nuclear Proliferation in North East Asia

The future of EU - ASEAN relations

Human Rights Provisions in Economic Partnership Agreements in Light of the Expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020

Nuclear Proliferation in North East Asia
Challenges to Freedom of the Seas and Maritime Rivalry in Asia

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 14-03-2017
External author: Patrick HÉBRARD (Fondation pour la recherche stratégique - FRS, Paris, France)

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: South Asia | United States | law of the sea | Japan | foreign policy | China | ASEAN | regional security | defence policy | UN convention | EU relations | Australia | territorial dispute | economic cooperation | shipping policy | maritime shipping | geopolitics

Summary: China’s New Maritime Silk Road policy poses geostrategic challenges and offers some opportunities for the US and its allies in Asia-Pacific. To offset China’s westward focus, the US seeks to create a global alliance strategy with the aim to maintain a balance of power in Eurasia, to avoid a strong Russia-China or China-EU partnership fostered on economic cooperation. For the EU, the ‘One Belt, One Road’ (OBOR) initiative by improving infrastructure may contribute to economic development in neighbouring countries and in Africa but present also risks in terms of unfair economic competition and increased Chinese domination. Furthermore, China’s behaviour in the South China Sea and rebuff of the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, in July 2016, put the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) at risk with possible consequences to freedom of the seas. Increasing relations with China could also affect EU-US relations at a time of China-US tension. To face these challenges, a stronger EU, taking more responsibility in Defence and Security, including inside NATO, is needed.

In-Depth Analysis

European Council Conclusions: A Rolling Check-List of Commitments to Date (11th edition)

Publication type: Study
Date: 10-03-2017
Author: Susanna TENHUNEN | Izabela Cristina BACIAN | Ralf DRACHENBERG | Suzana Elena ANGHEL

Keyword: single market | digital single market | social policy | area of freedom, security and justice | common foreign and security policy | international relations | development policy | European Council | climate change policy | competitiveness | energy policy | economic policy | international trade | tax harmonisation | EU employment policy

Summary: The European Council’s role - to ‘provide the Union with the necessary impetus for its development’ and to define its ‘general political directions and priorities’ - has developed rapidly over the past seven years. Since June 2014, the European Council Oversight Unit within the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), the European Parliament’s in-house research service and think-tank, has been monitoring and analysing the European Council’s delivery of the various commitments made in the conclusions of its meetings. This overview, presented in the form of a regularly updated Rolling Check-List of Commitments to Date, is designed to review the degree of progress in realising the goals which the European Council has set itself since January 2010 and to assist the Parliament in exercising its important oversight role in this field.

Study

Women’s Economic Empowerment at International Level

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 02-03-2017
External author: Abigail HUNT and Moizza BINAT SARWAR

Keyword: sexual discrimination | work | unpaid leave | UNO | women’s rights | female work | gender equality | human rights | International Labour Organisation

Summary: Upon request by the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament, this note provides background information for the FEMM Committee mission to the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women which will be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 13 to 24 March 2017. The note focuses on the key priority theme of the 61st Session: “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work”.

In-Depth Analysis
Impacts of the CETA Agreement on Developing Countries

**Publication type**: Study

**Date**: 16-02-2017

**External author**: Peter Draper

**Policy area**: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs

**Keyword**: common commercial policy | economic consequence | developing countries | originating product | trade agreement (EU) | Canada | trade relations | South Africa | trading operation | Tanzania | trade policy | harmonisation of standards

**Summary**: With the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) negotiations concluded and subsequently signed by both parties, the European Union and Canada’s most progressive trade agreement to date is set to provisionally enter into force soon. However, as developed countries move to negotiate preferential trade agreements between themselves (like the CETA), extending beyond current multilateral trade obligations, the improved market access, trade harmonisation and cross-cutting issues included in the agreements can have a much wider impact, affecting countries not party to them. As far as CETA is concerned, in our judgement those impacts are likely to be relatively small, and confined to a small group of vulnerable states, especially those with concentrated export structures, and notably of primary products in direct competition with Canadian exports to the EU. However, given the limitations of this paper the conclusion is fairly speculative, and so a key recommendation is that more detailed analysis of potentially vulnerable exporters be conducted to narrow down a subsequent mitigation strategy. That mitigation strategy mainly revolves around the impact of non-tariff measures (NTMs), focusing on product standards, and Rules of Origin. Essentially the focus needs to be on a targeted development assistance package referencing the need to upgrade product standards capacities in vulnerable states, in order to maximise the potential of trade to contribute to economic growth and, thereby, poverty reduction.

**Study** EN

Addressing Developing Countries’ Challenges in Free Trade Implementation

**Publication type**: Study

**Date**: 02-02-2017

**External author**: Isabella MASSA and Christopher STEVENS (Overseas Development Institute)

**Policy area**: International Trade | Global Governance | Economics and Monetary Issues | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

**Keyword**: developing countries | liberalisation of trade | EDF | public finance | administrative reform | economic integration | tariff reduction | tax reform | economic consequence | ACP countries | trade agreement (EU) | customs | import tax

**Summary**: The present study places the potential effects of Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) liberalisation on government revenue in signatory states within the broader context of regional integration and global liberalisation. Based on a review of the secondary literature it finds that the revenue effect may be severe in some, but by no means all, cases and that the impacts now need to be updated by country-level studies using the details of liberalisation schedules actually agreed. The evidence also suggests that poor countries find it very hard to replace government revenue lost through liberalisation but that where there have been successes the measures taken include those needed to increase any gains from regional and global trade integration. Such reforms require sustained commitment (by donors and recipients) over many years. The stresses created by EPAs (and regional liberalisation) increase the need for such commitment; but they also offer an opportunity since they include an appropriate framework for providing appropriate assistance. Yet data on flows of aid for trade do not indicate that an adequate commitment has yet been made. Six recommendations are made on actions that the European Parliament might champion to reduce the risks of an ‘EPA revenue squeeze’ in ways that support recipients’ capacity to benefit from greater regional and global integration.

**Study** EN

EU-Philippines relations: Beyond trade and aid?

**Publication type**: Briefing

**Date**: 17-01-2017

**Author**: Martin RUSSELL

**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs

**Keyword**: head of government | government violence | bilateral relations | international human rights law | trafficking in human beings | rule of law | trade agreement | Philippines | judicial reform | ASEAN | international investment | humanitarian aid | development aid | international convention

**Summary**: Recent controversial statements by new Philippines President, Rodrigo Duterte are threatening to derail progress towards closer partnership between his country and the EU. Nevertheless, practical cooperation between the two sides, which began with European Community development aid 50 years ago, continues essentially unchanged. The EU and its Member States are still among the leading donors of aid to the Philippines, and EU-Philippines trade and investment is substantial. However, economic ties still offer considerable untapped potential. A free trade agreement is currently under negotiation. The two sides have already concluded a partnership and cooperation agreement, now awaiting ratification. Once in force, this will help to strengthen not only economic ties, but also cooperation in the many areas where the EU and the Philippines have shared interests, such as migration, fisheries and maritime labour. Particularly under Duterte’s predecessor, the pro-Western Benigno Aquino (2010-2016), EU-Philippines relations were based not only on shared interests but also values. The Philippines is a democracy and, due to its history, one of the most westernised countries in Asia. Shared values have helped to make the country one of the EU's closest allies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). While Duterte's anti-EU statements have not ended such cooperation, they have created uncertainty over future developments. The EU has adopted a wait-and-see approach; less cordial relations are likely to result.

**Briefing** EN
Human rights in the Philippines

Author: Martin RUSSELL
Date: 17-01-2017
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Summary: Since mid-2016, President Rodrigo Duterte’s controversial war on drugs has triggered a wave of extrajudicial killings. The current violence reflects longer-term problems, such as high crime rates and a dysfunctional justice system. However, there are still many areas, such as freedom of expression and gender equality, where the Philippines does better than most other Asian countries.

The Budgetary Tools for Financing the EU External Policy

External author: Roland Blomeyer, Sebastian Paulo and Elsa Perreau (Blomeyer & Sanz)
Policy area: Budget | European Added Value | Forward Planning | Budgetary Control | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Global Governance | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Summary: The paper provides an overview of the current set-up of tools contributing to the funding of the EU external policies. The focus is on the recently established instruments and how they relate to the previously existing ones. The paper provides a first assessment of the current and envisaged set up of tools with regards to the following key aspects: added-value, coherence, flexibility and simplification, and democratic oversight of EU funding for external action.

Japan-Russia Summit: Time to exploit complementarities?

Author: Enrico D’AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Summary: Russian President Vladimir Putin – who has already met Japan’s Prime Minister, Shinzō Abe several times, both in Russia and elsewhere – will make a long-awaited official visit to Japan on 15 and 16 December 2016. The visit is the outcome of Abe’s effort to create a climate of confidence between the two countries, and thereby achieve an agreement on the territorial dispute that has prevented the signature of a peace treaty for more than 70 years, which concerns the islands known as the Northern Territories or Southern Kurils. Japan – a technologically advanced country – and Russia – a country extraordinarily rich in mineral resources – have complementary economies that would gain mutual benefit from a higher degree of cooperation. Nevertheless, despite their geographical proximity, the level of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries is comparatively low.

Republic of Korea: Impact of the Leadership Crisis and Security Threats on the Economy

Author: Anna SAARELA
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Summary: After decades of authoritarian military rule, South Korea — an East Asian nation on the southern half of the Korean Peninsula — has opened up politically. The current president, Park Guen-hye, faces a range of domestic problems. Recently, a corruption scandal triggered widespread protests and caused her approval ratings to plummet. The US continues to be an important ally in both economic and political terms, particularly in light of deteriorating relations with North Korea, whose nuclear programme has accelerated in 2016. Economically, South Korea, one of the world’s most rapidly aging societies, faces major challenges despite its strong growth and export record. Measures are needed to tackle low employment among women and young people and to support the elderly as well as to promote social inclusion. The large proportion of irregular workers on the labour market accounts for the big wage gap and high relative poverty rate. Economic restructuring in China, South Korea’s biggest trading partner, also has a spill-over effect.

Source: © European Union, 2021 - EP
APEC – Driving trade and regional integration

Publication type At a Glance
Date 16-11-2016
Author Krisztina BINDER

Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword statistics | international trade | ASEAN | Asia–Pacific economic cooperation

Summary The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is one of the most important regional economic groupings. Its long-standing commitment is to enhance economic growth, promote trade and create prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. From its launch in 1989 to 2014, total APEC trade grew more than seven times, exceeding US$22 trillion, and GDP increased from US$11 trillion to US$44 trillion. With Peru hosting the APEC process in 2016, the 24th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, the forum's highest level political meeting each year, will take place in Lima, on 19-20 November 2016.

At a Glance EN

Human rights in Indonesia

Publication type At a Glance
Date 24-10-2016
Author Martin RUSSELL

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword Indonesia | violence | autonomous movement | religious discrimination | political violence | human rights

Summary The human rights situation in Indonesia has improved considerably thanks to the country’s successful democratic transition, but there are still many concerns – for example, violence against religious minorities and repression of Papuan separatism. President Jokowi has pledged to resolve historical human rights abuses, but has made little progress since his election in 2014.

At a Glance EN

Indonesia: Political landscape under President Jokowi

Publication type At a Glance
Date 24-10-2016
Author Martin RUSSELL

Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword secularity | fire | Indonesia | bilateral relations | freedom of the press | Islam | democratisation | ASEAN | human rights

Summary After the downfall of former dictator Suharto in 1998, Indonesia underwent a successful democratic transition. Current President Jokowi heads a coalition government with an ambitious reform agenda tackling some of the country's long-term problems, but the lack of progress by his predecessors on this front suggests that he will find it difficult to achieve real change.

At a Glance EN

Research for TRAN Committee - The Japanese Transport System

Publication type Briefing
Date 14-10-2016
Author Marc THOMAS

Policy area Forward Planning | Transport | Tourism

Summary This overview of the transport and tourism sectors in Japan was prepared to provide information for the mission of the Transport and Tourism Committee to the country in 2016 (31 October - 4 November 2016).

Briefing EN

BIMSTEC: Building bridges between south and south-east Asian countries - Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

Publication type Briefing
Date 13-10-2016
Author Enrico D’AMBROGIO

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Summary The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), created in 1997, gathers together seven south and south-east Asian countries. BIMSTEC advocates economic growth for its members through sector-driven cooperation. So far, the organisation has lacked regular impetus, holding only three summits to date. However, the fourth summit is to be held in October 2016 in Goa (India), on the margins of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) summit. BIMSTEC will thus have the opportunity to enhance its visibility and boost ties with emerging powers. For India, membership of BIMSTEC is a key element of its ‘Act East’ doctrine. The organisation increasingly provides a viable alternative to SAARC (the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), which is lagging behind due to strained relations between India and Pakistan. However, stronger leadership is required from New Delhi for BIMSTEC to become a tool for enhancing economic growth and connectivity among its members.

Briefing EN
Towards the eighth BRICS Summit: What future for the 'emerging power' bloc?

Policy area: Global Governance | Foreign Affairs

Summary: The next BRICS Summit will take place in Goa, India on 15 and 16 October 2016. This is the eighth year that the leaders of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (since 2011 only) will come together since the institutionalisation of cooperation among the major emerging economies in 2009. While a range of doubts exist regarding the longevity and cohesion of the bloc, given the disappointing economic performance of several of its members in recent years, the group appears confident that the summit will lead to further intra-BRICS cooperation, including in the areas of customs authorities, environment and agriculture. Terrorism will also be a key issue in the discussions. According to observers, the aim of the summit will be to consolidate existing institutions, including the BRICS-led New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement. It will also be an opportunity for India to underline its prime status among emerging powers, as it is currently growing faster than any other major economy. In 2017 the BRICS chair will be taken over by China.

Briefing EN

Human rights in Vietnam

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Summary: Despite constitutional guarantees, Vietnam has one of the worst human rights records in south-east Asia, with severely restricted freedom of expression, as well as a ban on opposition parties and in general on independent organisations. Recent improvements to LGBTI rights and the criminal justice system are among the few bright spots. EU support for Vietnamese human rights includes funding and a human rights dialogue.

At a Glance EN

International Agreements in Progress: EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council

Summary: The recently negotiated free trade agreement (FTA) with Vietnam has been described as the most ambitious deal of its type ever concluded between the EU and a developing country. Not only will it eliminate over 99% of customs duties on goods, it will also open up Vietnamese services markets to EU companies and strengthen protection of EU investments in the country. According to European Commission figures, the FTA could boost Vietnam's booming economy by as much as 15% of GDP, with Vietnamese exports to Europe growing by over one third. For the EU, the agreement is an important stepping stone to a wider EU-south-east Asia trade deal. Despite the obvious economic benefits of the FTA for Vietnam, some of its more vulnerable manufacturing sectors may suffer from competition with the EU. NGOs have also criticised the EU for pursuing closer ties with a politically repressive regime known for its human rights abuses, although the deal includes some safeguards against negative outcomes. Although the content of the FTA has been agreed, its precise wording is still being checked. The finalised text is likely to be presented to the European Parliament for consent in 2017. If the FTA is deemed to be a 'mixed agreement', it will have to be ratified not only by the EU but also by the 28 Member States. First edition. The 'International Agreements in Progress' briefings are updated at key stages throughout the process, from initial discussions through to ratification.

Briefing EN

International Agreements in Progress: Prospective EU-Japan free trade agreement

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs

Summary: Negotiations on an EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) were officially launched in March 2013. There have been 17 rounds of negotiations to date, with the latest taking place at the end of September 2016, in Brussels. Although there is strong political will to conclude the agreement as early as possible, whether the FTA can be finalised by the end of 2016 remains to be seen. The deal with Japan, the EU's second largest trading partner in Asia, is expected to enhance trade and investment relationships between the two parties. European companies, especially those in the food, feed and processed food sectors, will benefit from improved access to the Japanese market. mainly through the reduction both of tariffs on specific goods as well as existing regulatory and non-tariff barriers. The Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment for the EU-Japan FTA indicates that the EU-Japan FTA and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement, involving the EU and the United States, would result in similar levels of economic gains for Europe. Moreover, the EU-Japan FTA may balance the potentially negative effects of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, which counts Japan among its members, on the EU.

Briefing EN
**North Korea's propaganda strategy**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 04-10-2016  
**Author** Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** third country | North Korea | UN Security Council | political propaganda | international sanctions | dictatorship | international relations | human rights  
**Summary** The internationally isolated regime of the Democratic Popular Republic of Korea (or North Korea) needs to build consensus around the idea that, under the direction of a young dynamic leader, the nation's living standards have improved amidst vivid economic and technological growth. North Koreans are often forced to contribute their free labour to campaigns, as a way to attest their devotion to the nation and help make it stronger in the face of its external enemies. Kim Jong Un's coming to power has helped modernise the image of the North Korean leadership. His sister, Kim Yo Jong, has been put in charge of Pyongyang's Propaganda and Agitation Department. The regime is building a nationalistic narrative that increasingly targets young people and elites while keeping information under strict control, in a country whose population is today less inclined to believe in propaganda than in the past. The USA, South Korea, and occasionally Japan, are the targets of bellicose North Korean rhetoric that has often had a destabilising effect on the region. Anti-US propaganda has been a primary theme in Pyongyang's efforts to boost patriotic feeling, while the duel with Seoul often resembles old-fashioned psychological warfare.

**Briefing** EN

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**ACP-EU relations beyond 2020**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 27-09-2016  
**Author** Eric PICHON  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** development policy | ACP countries | political cooperation | ACP-EU relationship | EDF | Cotonou Agreement | trade relations | international convention | democratisation | civil society | human rights  
**Summary** Twenty-eight European Union (EU) Member States and 78 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries are legally bound by the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement, with its three intertwined pillars: a political dimension, development strategies and economic and trade cooperation. In February 2020, the Cotonou Agreement will expire and a new relationship has to be designed, taking into account the achievements and shortcomings of the agreement. The EU position is expected by May 2017. The European Parliament's consent will be required before a new agreement is concluded.

**At a Glance** ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL

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**Climate Action and the Emissions Trading System (ETS) in China**

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 15-09-2016  
**External author** Sean Healy, Martin Cames and Felix Matthes  
**Policy area** Environment | Forward Planning | Energy | Industry  
**Keyword** emission allowance | reduction of gas emissions | emission trading | China  
**Summary** In October 2011, seven ETS pilots (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Chongqing, Guangdong, Hubei and Shenzhen) were approved by the Chinese government. Starting in 2013 and 2014, they were designed to lay the foundation for a national ETS (scheduled to start in 2017), to ensure that carbon and energy intensity targets are achieved while minimising abatement costs. The briefing outlines the key differences between the EU ETS and the Chinese ETS, the support provided to the development of the Chinese ETS from abroad, as well as the key challenges that lie ahead for the successful implementation of a national ETS in China.

**Briefing** EN
China and the South China Sea issue
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 09-09-2016
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Summary: On 12 July 2016, an Arbitral Tribunal, set up under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), between the Republic of the Philippines and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) published its award about conflicting maritime claims in the South China Sea, ruling overwhelmingly in favour of the Philippines. According to the legally binding ruling, China’s ‘nine-dash line’ and ‘historic claims’ have no legal basis under UNCLOS. The tribunal found that China had violated the Philippines’ rights with regard to fishing, oil exploitation, land reclamation and artificial island building, and had caused severe damage to the marine environment, including by using harmful fishing methods and harvesting endangered species. The award’s de facto impact on the long-standing conflicts over overlapping territorial and maritime claims between China and the Philippines, its spill-over effect on the erstwhile Anglo to varying degrees also between China and Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam, is highly unpredictable. China opposed arbitration from the outset by not participating in it, and by stating that it will not accept the outcome. Since there is no enforcement mechanism for the award, China’s response may vary between (partial, tacit) compliance, unchanged behaviour and escalation of conflicts. While Western democracies have welcomed the award, the EU has stopped short of calling for compliance with it. Only a handful of countries have criticised or rejected it. Maintaining peace and (maritime) security in the South China Sea is likely to become more challenging given increasingly asymmetric power relations between China and adjacent south-east Asian countries, fierce competition over fishing grounds and oil and gas deposits in disputed areas, and growing Sino-US geo-strategic rivalry.

EU-India Relations — Keeping up the Momentum Needed for a Vital Strategic Partnership
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 06-09-2016
Author: Anna SAARELA | Laurence VANDEWALLE
Policy area: Global Governance
Keyword: head of government | bicameral system | Kashmir question | political situation | India | sexual violence | position of women | trade relations | investment | foreign policy | human rights | defence policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | interparliamentary relations | cooperation agreement (EU) | summit meeting | economic situation
Summary: Relations between the EU and India seem to be back on track since leaders met in Brussels, on 30 March 2016, for their first summit in four years. They endorsed the EU-India Agenda for Action 2020 and their water, clean energy and security thinking. They set a common agenda on migration and mobility and they adopted a joint declaration on counter-terrorism. It is vital to keep up the momentum created at the summit. The strategic relationship is vital to both sides: India is Asia’s third-largest economy and the world’s fastest growing economy and the EU is India’s biggest trading partner. The EU is also the largest investor in India, with foreign direct investment stock valued at EUR 38.5 billion in 2014, and is the primary destination for Indian foreign investment.

Does the New EU Global Strategy Deliver on Security and Defence?
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 06-09-2016
Author: Jérôme LEGRAND
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | European Added Value | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: Spain | defence policy | France | Germany | United Kingdom | Visegrad countries | Netherlands | military cooperation | common security and defence policy | Italy
Summary: The Global Strategy for the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy presented by High Representative Federica Mogherini on 28 June 2016 sets out a ‘Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe’, in response to the Member States’ request for a new framework in which the EU can tackle the challenges and key changes to the EU’s environment identified in a strategic assessment carried out in 2015. Many expectations were raised ahead of its publication but it soon became clear that defence would be a central element of the Global Strategy. A number of defence priorities emerged from the exchanges between the main stakeholders: a central role for the common security and defence policy (CSDP); a clear level of ambition with tools to match; emphasis on EU-NATO cooperation; and concrete follow-up measures such as a ‘White Book’ on European defence. Seen in this light, the Global Strategy captures the urgent need to face the challenges of today’s environment and it may prove to be a major turning point in EU foreign policy and security thinking. It emphasizes the value of hard power — including via a strong partnership with NATO — along with soft power. It will not be easy for the Member States to match the level of ambition set in the Global Strategy and its success will be judged in terms of the follow-up and the measures taken to implement it. Could the first step be a White Book on European Defence?
Financial Services Liberalisation and TiSA: Implications for EU Free Trade Agreements

Publication type: Study
Date: 26-07-2016
External author: Andrew LANG and Leonie AMARASEKARA
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance
Keyword: impact study | freedom to provide services | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | free-trade agreement | investment protection | exchange of information | trade agreement (EU) | financial legislation | market access | financial services | most favoured nation | protective clause
Summary: With 23 participating countries, including all of the world’s largest financial centres, covering the vast bulk of global financial services trade, the TiSA negotiations on financial services trade are strategically important for the EU. They are likely to deliver commitments and rules, which go significantly beyond the GATS package negotiated over two decades ago – and to extend their umbrella to a greater range of countries. In addition, the level of market access commitments ultimately incorporated into TiSA will set a new benchmark and reference point for future EU FTA negotiations. Depending on the outcome of remaining negotiations, the TiSA may also establish influential new and consolidated texts on such matters as data transfer, forced localisation, source code, regulatory transparency, and domestic regulation.

India and China: Too Close for Comfort?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 15-07-2016
Author: Laurence VANDEWALLE | Elina VILLUP | Susana MENDONCA | Jérôme LEGRAND | SHALENE DATTA
Keyword: water management | India | contemporary history | foreign policy | China | regional security | transport infrastructure | defence policy | cross-border cooperation | EU relations | military cooperation | trade policy | geopolitics | economic situation
Summary: India and China — two emerging Asian giants — have historically been polar opposites in many ways and relations between them have been tense. In recent years, however, their co-operation has been improving and they have signed numerous bilateral agreements. From the EU’s perspective, it is crucial to monitor the relationship between these strategic partners. Not only do these two emerging countries have the two largest populations in the world, but projections suggest that they will together account for a significant share of the world economy by the middle of the century. The EU must be able to meet the regional and even global challenges presented by the rise of China and India.

EU-Led Security Sector Reform and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Cases: Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Ways Forward

Publication type: Study
Date: 14-07-2016
External author: Samir BATTIS, José LUENGO-CABRERA and Pol MORILLAS
Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: establishment of peace | EU police mission | the EU's international role | EU military mission | peacekeeping | armed forces | disarmament | conflict prevention
Summary: Although the EU has become a leading multilateral actor in the field of security sector reform (SSR), it continues to face significant challenges that hinder its potential for delivery. In the run-up to the prospective adoption of an EU-wide strategic framework for supporting SSR, this study aims to shed light on the realities faced by SSR policy makers and practitioners. By looking at the EU’s SSR track record, as well its involvement in the complementary process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), this study provides an assessment of the lessons learnt and highlights the ways forward for the EU as a security provider, particularly ahead of the launch of its maiden Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS).
New sanctions against North Korea: The challenges of implementation and China

Publication type Briefing
Date 05-07-2016
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword European External Action Service | United States | North Korea | South Korea | trade restriction | nuclear weapon | Japan | international sanctions | military manoeuvres | UN resolution | nuclear test | China

Summary In January 2016, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, exposing the inability of UN sanctions to prevent the reclusive regime from gradually enhancing its ballistic missile capabilities and miniaturising a nuclear warhead. Despite China's past principled reluctance to agree to UN economic sanctions against its military ally, and its selective implementation of the previous sanctions scheme, which has been widely perceived as the major cause of its ineffectiveness, in March 2016 China endorsed UN Security Council resolution 2270(2016). The latter expands significantly the scope of previous sanctions against North Korea. China's frustration at its lack of leverage over North Korea to prevent it from further escalating regional tensions, combined with the response from Japan, South Korea and the United States, has compelled it to endorse tougher sanctions against North Korea as a means of bringing it back to the negotiation table. However, China has emphasised that stiffer sanctions alone will not be a panacea for the Korean Peninsula's denuclearisation. China plays a vital role in ensuring a meaningful impact of the newly adopted sanctions, given its intense economic relations with North Korea. A consensus between China and the USA on a common approach to North Korea which accommodates their conflicting geostrategic interests would be crucial for engaging North Korea. But given the latter's staunch insistence on its status as a nuclear-armed state, prospects are grim for a resumption of the stalled Six Party Talks to replicate – under much more complex circumstances – what was achieved with Iran in 2015.

Good Governance in EU External Relations: What Role for Development Policy in a Changing International Context?

Publication type Study
Date 04-07-2016
External author Christine HACKENESCH
Policy area Budget | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Global Governance | Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword governance | developing countries | the EU's international role | distribution of aid | ACP-EU relationship | development aid | terms for aid | sustainable development | EU financing | democratisation | human rights

Summary EU support for governance reforms has gained prominence in the EU's external relations and particularly in the EU's development policy. However, the EU's engagement in this field has come under considerable pressure in recent years. It is by no means automatic that the EU will continue and further increase its engagement in supporting governance reforms. In this context, the objective of this study is to summarise evidence from academic research on why the EU and other donors should support governance reforms and under which conditions EU support positively contributes to governance reforms. Moreover, the study analyses how the EU has aimed at contributing to governance reforms during the past decade, focusing in particular on the Development Cooperation Instrument and the European Development Fund. The study puts emphasis on EU development policy, but places the analysis of governance support through development policy in the broader context of EU external relations. The study makes recommendations related to EU good governance support, to good governance support through the DCI and EDF, to ongoing strategy processes in EU external relations, and also in regard to the future of the EU's relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

Australia's double dissolution election

Publication type At a Glance
Date 29-06-2016
Author Krisztina BINDER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword election programme | bicameral system | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | political parties | Australia | political situation | free-trade agreement | two-party system | dissolution of parliament | foreign policy | parliamentary election

Summary On 2 July 2016, following the double dissolution of their federal Parliament, Australians will elect the 150 members of the House of Representatives (the lower house) and the 76 members of the Senate (the upper house). Domestic politics has been central to this election campaign, and the outcome of the UK's EU referendum has made political parties focus even more acutely on domestic stability. On the eve of the election, it is still difficult to predict which of the two major parties will win and whether either of them will be able to form a majority government.
Mongolia ahead of the 2016 legislative elections

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 28-06-2016
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: investment policy | foreign investment | Mongolia | EU relations | political parties | political situation | election monitoring | parliamentary election | voting method | economic situation

Summary: The elections to Mongolia's unicameral State Great Khural scheduled for 29 June 2016 will be held amidst a serious deterioration of the country's macroeconomic indicators caused by domestic and external factors. There is widespread voter scepticism as regards the ability of the national political elites to curb rising unemployment and poverty which affects a third of the population, as well as to eradicate pervasive corruption. The new election arrangements suggest a two-horse race between the ruling centre-right Democratic Party and the opposition centre-left Mongolian People's Party. To support Mongolia's fragile democracy, sandwiched between authoritarian China and Russia, the European Parliament is sending a delegation to observe the elections.

Personal data transfers to China

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 20-06-2016
Author: Shara MONTELEONE
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: third country | data-processing law | access to information | protection of privacy | EP Committee | disclosure of information | Court of Justice (EU) | cross-frontier data flow | personal data | data protection | China

Summary: Developments in online services and cloud computing mean the time has come to pay more attention to the protection afforded to EU citizens when transferring personal data to China.

How the EU and Member States Manage Data Transparency and Accessibility on EU Funds

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2016
External author: Michèle Finck (LSE Enterprise), Katharina Ehrhart (LSE Enterprise) and Jorge Nunez Ferrer (CEPS)
Policy area: Budget | Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Budgetary Control | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Global Governance | Agriculture and Rural Development | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Regional Development
Keyword: third country | data collection | EU Member State | EU initiative | administrative transparency | distribution of EU funding

Summary: The objective of this study is to identify factors that impact on transparency and accessibility in the EU and its Member States. Cases studies with reference to shared management have been carried out in Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and Poland. A variety of funds in direct and indirect management as well as the European Development Fund are also part of the research. The periods under scrutiny are the Multiannual Financial Frameworks (MFF) 2007 – 2013 and in particular 2014 – 2020. Finally, the study concludes with evidence-based policy recommendations which can allow further data transparency and accessibility.

The Cultural Revolution in China: Its 50th Anniversary Was Ignored but Its Legacy Lives on Today

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 07-06-2016
Author: Roberto BENDINI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: political behaviour | government violence | Communism | political situation | head of State | contemporary history | one-party system | political violence | China | Communist Party

Summary: The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was one of the most tragic periods in China's history. It unleashed a decade of violence, in which more than a million Chinese died, some 16 million were banished to the countryside and many others suffered imprisonment, seizure of property, torture or humiliation. It left in its wake a shattered country, a fractured society in turmoil and a devastated economy. The Chinese Communist Party ignored the 50th anniversary on 16 May of the start of the Cultural Revolution, with no official commemoration. The state-controlled media then exhorted the people to regard the Cultural Revolution as a closed chapter and to look ahead. They distanced the Party from its responsibilities for the disaster, in an indication that the country's leaders are still haunted by its spectre. Nonetheless, the Cultural Revolution's legacy lives on in modern China and some parallels are being drawn with the current President Xi Jinping's crackdown against corruption. Xi's use of some of the Revolution's methods seems to reflect a pragmatic attempt to reassert the Party's authority in response to the new challenges posed by the rapid transformation of China, rather than heralding a repeat of the Cultural Revolution. The Party has said its lessons have been learned and it must not be repeated. Nevertheless, the former Premier, Wen Jiabao, cautioned in 2012 that without effective political reforms, a similar historical tragedy might happen again.
Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 06-06-2016
Author: Krisztina BINDER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: regional security | defence policy | information security | military research | Australia | submarine | military cooperation | freedom of navigation | foreign policy | China
Summary: The 2016 Defence White Paper (DWP) states that the United States will remain Australia’s 'most important strategic partner', while pointing to concerns about China's growing assertiveness. Defence spending envisaged in the DWP is to increase by approximately 80% over the next ten years, with a quarter of investments going to maritime and anti-submarine warfare. Australia has also launched its largest-ever defence procurement programme, with French firm DCNS selected as its international partner for the AU$50 billion (€34.3 billion) future submarine programme.

North Korea: Seventh Party Congress Enshrines Nuclear Ambitions but Says Little about Economic Reform

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 02-06-2016
Author: Roberto BENDINI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights
Keyword: United States | nuclear weapon | head of State | common foreign and security policy | party congress | economic reform | China | defence policy | North Korea | South Korea | international sanctions | nuclear policy | authoritarian regime | armed forces | Communist Party | economic situation
Summary: The Korean Workers' Party (KWP) held its Seventh Congress, the first since 1980, from 6 to 9 May 2016. In theory, the Congress is the highest deliberative body of the only governing party of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The Congress yielded relatively modest results, with no real breakthrough, apart from establishing the 'defensive' nuclear deterrence concept. Kim Jong-un's position as North Korea's supreme leader was fully formalised and now seems to be stronger than ever. The Party is likely to gain further power at the expense of the military. Nuclear deterrence is now firmly enshrined in the Party's statutes as well as the country's constitution. Pyongyang has made clear that no nuclear deal is possible unless the US and its allies accept North Korea as a 'nuclear state'. Despite its propaganda announcements, North Korea is not ready to modernise its sclerotic economy. While some cautious developments cannot be ruled out, the regime's open criticism of the Chinese economic model suggest that any reforms would be limited and very probably inconclusive.

State-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms in China: A decisive role for the market at last?

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 31-05-2016
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: corporate governance | economic policy | privatisation | public sector | economic reform | economic transition | China
Summary: SOEs continue to play a key role in China's political economy, although after more than three decades of experimental and gradual reforms, aimed at preserving rather than eliminating them, their economic significance in terms of output, profit and employment has diminished with the expansion of the private sector. Since the Chinese government uses SOEs as a tool to pursue social, industrial and foreign policy objectives, they benefit from direct and indirect subsidies for factor costs (notably capital, energy and land) and regulatory preference, not least under competition law, in public procurement and as a result of a highly restrictive (foreign direct) investment regime. This has allowed them to maintain their position as administrative monopolies in a broad range of sectors. Despite their privileges, however, SOEs tend to lag behind the private sector in terms of efficiency and profitability and suffer heavily from over-capacity and debt. SOE reform is an important part of China's transition to a market-driven economy. However, despite the Chinese leadership's pledge at the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2013 to let the market play a 'decisive role' in resource allocation, the current reform design suggests that SOEs are likely to retain many of their privileges, hindering private domestic and foreign firms in their attempts to compete with SOEs on a more equal footing in and outside China in the future.
The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Potential regional and global impacts

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 31-05-2016
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | photovoltaic cell | footwear industry | appeal to the Court (EU) | import (EU) | cycle and motorcycle industry | trade dispute | household article | two-wheeled vehicle | anti-dumping legislation | China | iron and steel industry

Summary: In 2015, China remained by far the major target of antidumping (AD) investigations initiated by the European Commission. With a total of 53 AD measures in force against imports from China in that year, the country ranked ahead of Indonesia (10), Malaysia (6), Russia (6), India (5) and Taiwan (5). All six new AD probes in 2015 concerned the country, although Russia and Taiwan were also targeted in two of those. AD duties imposed in past probes and expiring between 2016 and 2020 are concentrated in labour- and resource-intensive sectors, such as bicycles, ceramics, chemicals, solar panels and steel products, and concern imports from China and other NAFTA countries. China steel imports into the EU, in February 2016 new AD investigations into several steel products from China were launched. For details of the methodology for 'Calculation of dumping margins', at the heart of all antidumping cases, see the EPRS publication by Laura Puccio, PE 583.794.

Religious pluralism in Indonesia: Harmonious traditions face challenges

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 19-05-2016
Author: Martin RUSSELL
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: national law | political situation | freedom of religious beliefs | Indonesia | constitution | religious discrimination | Islam | protection of minorities | religious group | religious fundamentalism

Summary: A mosaic of cultures, languages and religions, Indonesia shares not only the EU's motto (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, Unity in Diversity), but is also one of its values, such as tolerance, pluralism and, since the 1998 downfall of former dictator Suharto, also democracy. With many other Muslim-majority states torn by conflicts and persecution of religious minorities, Indonesia stands out as an example of a country where different faiths are able to co-exist harmoniously. Despite this globally positive picture, there are some concerns about religious freedoms in the country. It is true that the rights of the largest minorities, such as the Christians and Hindus, are enshrined in primary and secondary legislation. On the other hand, blasphemy laws have been used to repress smaller minorities, and some recently adopted legislation reflects Islamic values. The wave of intercommunal violence which broke out after Suharto's downfall has since subsided, but occasional attacks continue against certain minorities such as Shia and Ahmadi Muslims. While the number of such incidents is very low for a country of Indonesia's size, they point to wider underlying intolerance. Over the years, the Indonesian authorities have not done enough to promote religious pluralism, sometimes showing bias against minorities. New president Joko Widodo made tolerance one of his priorities, and since he took office in 2014 his government has made some encouraging gestures. However, there are as yet no signs of real change on the ground.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Potential regional and global impacts

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 12-05-2016
Author: Kristzina BINDER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: trade by group of countries | common commercial policy | free-trade agreement | liberalisation of trade | Japan | Chile | Brunei | China | New Zealand | economic consequence | EU relations | ratification of an agreement | Australia | Malaysia | Singapore | trade agreement (EU) | Peru | NAFTA countries | Vietnam

Summary: On 4 February 2016, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement was signed by 12 countries: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam. It encompasses about 800 million people, and the participating countries account for roughly a quarter of global trade and approximately 40% of the world's GDP. The TPP – described by US President Barack Obama as 'a regional agreement that will have broad-based membership and the high standards worthy of a 21st century trade agreement' – provides deeper liberalisation for trade in goods and services and introduces a set of common rules in a number of fields, going beyond current WTO plus commitments in existing free trade agreements. It is highly probable that the TPP, although yet to be ratified, will influence the way that regional free trade agreements, including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), develop. Alongside China's growing stature and the increase in intraregional economic relations in the Asia-Pacific region, the TPP could adversely affect the interests of the EU. It remains to be seen how quickly the forthcoming ratification and implementation process can be completed, what the ultimate economic significance of the TPP will be, and whether other countries will be able to join the partnership.
Workshop on "Human rights in North Korea: Accountability vs. Engagement?"

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis  
Date: 12-05-2016

External author: Mariam KHOTENASHVILI (Trans European Policy Studies Association - TEPSA, Belgium)

Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword: North Korea | the EU's international role | international sanctions | isolationism | UNO | authoritarian regime | common foreign and security policy | weapon of mass destruction | human rights

Summary: Workshop on "Human rights in North Korea: accountability vs. engagement?", held on 20 April 2016 in the European Parliament.

In-Depth Analysis: EN

Land Grabbing and Human Rights: The Involvement of European Corporate and Financial Entities in Land Grabbing outside the European Union

Publication type: Study  
Date: 10-05-2016

External author: Saturnino M. BORRAS Jr. (International Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands), Philip SEUFERT (FIAN International, Germany), Stephan BACKES (FIAN International, Belgium), Daniel FYFE (FIAN International, Switzerland), Roman HERRE (FIAN Germany, Germany), Laura MICHELE (FIAN International, Germany) and Elyse MILLS (International Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands)

Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights

Keyword: self-regulation | common commercial policy | the EU's international role | corporate social responsibility | self-sufficiency in food | biofuel | business ethics | social rights | investment abroad | human rights | development policy | land mobility | extraterritorial jurisdiction

Summary: In early research on land grabbing, the initial focus was on foreign companies investing abroad, with a particular focus on those based in countries such as China, Gulf States, South Korea, and India. In recent years, it has become evident that the range of countries land investors originate in is far broader, and includes both North Atlantic - and EU-based actors. In this study, we offer both quantitative and qualitative data illustrating the involvement of EU-based corporate and financial entities in land deals occurring outside of the EU. This study also analyses the global land rush within a human rights framework, examining the implications of particular land deals involving EU-based investors and their impact on communities living in areas where the investments are taking place. The research presented here builds partly on Cotula's 2014 study on the drivers and human rights implications of land grabbing, but differs in that it focuses explicitly on particular cases of possible, actual or potential human rights abuses and violations, in the context of activities involving European corporate and financial entities. In our conclusions, we offer a series of recommendations on how the EU can more effectively address these issues.

Study: EN, FR

Annex I: EN, FR

Philippine political landscape ahead of elections

Publication type: At a Glance  
Date: 02-05-2016

Author: Martin RUSSELL

Policy area: Foreign Affairs

Keyword: EU relations | presidential régime | political situation | organisation of elections | freedom of the press | territorial dispute | political violence | election monitoring | political figure | Philippines | presidential election | economic situation

Summary: On 9 May 2016 Filipinos will elect executives and legislatures at local, provincial and national level. The spotlight is on the close-run presidential race between four main contenders. Overall the elections are expected to be reasonably free and fair, although some concerns remain.

At a Glance: EN

Thailand in 2016: Restoring Democracy or Reversing it?

Publication type: Study  
Date: 18-04-2016

Author: Laurence VANDEWALLE | Anete BANDONE | Barbara BARONE | Carmen-Paz MARTI DOMINGUEZ

Policy area: Environment | International Trade | Democracy | Fisheries | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword: military regime | political situation | trafficking in human beings | trading operation | foreign policy | coup d'état | agreement (EU) | migrant worker | ASEAN | human rights | democracy | Thailand | trade policy | fishing regulations | economic situation

Summary: After staging a military coup against the Yingluck Shinawatra government, a junta has been ruling Thailand since 22 May 2014. It has drastically restricted political activities and freedom of speech. There have been numerous human rights abuses, including torture. Under a 'roadmap to democracy', a referendum on a new constitution is planned for August 2017 and could be followed by elections at a later stage. However, the military might retain power until the king’s successor accedes to the throne, in order to guarantee stability. Despite close trade ties, the EU has suspended the signing of a partnership and cooperation agreement and negotiations on a free trade agreement until democracy is restored. In April 2015, Thailand received a 'yellow card' warning by the European Commission for problems relating to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Study: DE, EN, FR, IT
Proceedings of the Workshop on "Organ Harvesting in China"

Publication type: Study  
Date: 12-04-2016  
External author: Joëlle Hivonnet, Stefaan Van der Spiegel, Beatriz Dominguez, Marta Lopez Fraga, Francis L. Delmonico, David Kilgour, Marie Charlotte Bouesseau and Huige Li  
Policy area: Public Health | Human Rights  
Keyword: trade in organs | political prisoner | medical law | organ transplant | international instrument | trafficking in human beings | China | human rights  
Summary: This workshop raised awareness on this issue and opens a debate on future transparent investigation by the European Union into organ transplant practice. The workshop consisted of different presentations and an exchange of views between MEPs and established experts in transplantation of organs, organ trafficking and international crime. The current organ trafficking around the world has created a substantial health risk contributing to a serious abuse of human rights, particularly of the right to life. This document reviews the scope for creating a fair system of organ donation and for the use of a more efficient and transparent organ database accessible to EU and eventually to global citizens. This document was provided by Policy Department A for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Study  EN

South Korea ahead of legislative elections

Publication type: At a Glance  
Date: 07-04-2016  
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: international security | North Korea | South Korea | unicameral system | EU relations | political situation | nuclear weapon | foreign policy | parliamentary election | nuclear test | economic situation | economic sanctions  
Summary: On 13 April 2016 the 300-member National Assembly will be renewed. Following January's nuclear test by North Korea, South Korea is experiencing high tension with its neighbour, which adds to political instability, a slowing economy, rising social inequality and concerns about freedoms.

At a Glance  EN

Workshop on "Market Economy Status for China after 2016?"

Publication type: Study  
Date: 16-03-2016  
Author: Barbara BARONE  
External author: Bernard O'CONNOR, Jean-François BELLIS, Robert SCOTT and Maurizio ZANARDI  
Policy area: International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs | Industry  
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | enlargement of an international organisation | economic consequence | interpretation of the law | market economy | international economic law | prices policy | protocol to an agreement | dumping | anti-dumping legislation | China  
Summary: Section 15 of China’s Protocol of Accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) allows importing WTO members to determine, under their national law, whether China is considered to be a market economy for the purpose of price comparability and of calculating dumping margins. Some provisions of this section expire on 11 December 2016, leaving uncertainty as to how China should be treated in antidumping investigations thereafter. The European Parliament’s Committee on International Trade (INTA) organised a workshop jointly with the Policy Department of the Directorate-General for External Policies in order to hear the views of different academic experts on both the legal and the economic implications.

Study  EN

Proceedings of the Workshop on "Trade and Economic Relations with Asia"

Publication type: Study  
Date: 07-03-2016  
External author: Alessia AMIGHINI, Elisa BORGHI, Rodolfo HELG and Lucia TAJOLI  
Policy area: International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs | Industry  
Keyword: common commercial policy | India | Japan | bilateral relations | trade relations | trading operation | economic relations | China | ASEAN | World Trade Organisation | New Zealand | economic consequence | South Korea | Australia | foreign trade | Singapore | economic activity | trade agreement (EU) | international trade | Asia–Pacific economic cooperation  
Summary: This publication consists of the proceedings and of three studies which were presented during the workshop on trade and economic relations with Asia:  
- Asia as a new global engine: foreign trade and regional cooperation;  
- EU external trade strategy vis-à-vis Asia;  
- Implementation of the EU-Republic of Korea FTA.

Study  EN
One Year to Go: The Debate over China's Market Economy Status (MES) Heats Up

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 17-12-2015

Author: Barbara BARONE

Policy area: International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs | Industry

Keyword: controlled economy | common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | enlargement of an international organisation | intervention policy | interpretation of the law | market economy | protocol to an agreement | price control | trade relations | anti-dumping legislation | China

Summary: Market economy status (MES) – a technical term used in antidumping investigations – has come to the top of the international agenda, bringing heated discussions on whether or not China will soon be granted this status. China argues that its WTO accession documents foresee an automatic acquisition of MES after 11 December 2016. Yet for many other WTO members, the text in question – Section 15 of China's Protocol of Accession – is subject to interpretation. The issue is sensitive for a number of reasons. Legally, the EU must ensure that its rules are compatible with the WTO's. But the economic aspects are complex – and potentially substantial for significant sectors of the Union's economy. The EU's ability to level the playing field for its own industrial products and imports from China depends on its ability to offset unfairly low prices of 'dumped' Chinese imports; the antidumping instruments the Union deploys to this end depend on China's MES. The issue also has political ramifications, and may well affect the Union's relationship with other countries.

In general, the EU would benefit from a more elaborated assessment than has yet been undertaken, from the input of the European Parliament, and from a more coordinated approach with major trading partners.

New Trade Rules for China? Opportunities and Threats for the EU

Publication type: Study
Date: 23-02-2016

External author: Erdal YALCIN, Gabriel FELBERMAYR, Alexander SANDKAMP

Policy area: International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs | Industry

Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | economic consequence | market economy | trade relations | dumping | international trade | international competition | anti-dumping legislation | China

Summary: Paragraph (a) (ii) of Article 15 in China's Accession Protocol to the WTO - which determines the basis on which dumping margins are calculated in Anti-dumping proceedings against China - is about to expire in December 2016. This ad hoc briefing aims to shed light on the economic and political implications that may arise for the EU from different strategies related to the treatment of China after this date, including the possibility of granting it market economy status.

The study provides an economic, legal, as well as political overview of EU Anti-dumping regulation and compares it to that of China's other main trading partners. It demonstrates that Anti-dumping constitutes a significant and frequently used trade defence instrument, although its use is extremely heterogeneous across countries and sectors. Even though market economy status is associated with lower Anti-dumping duties, granting it to China would not render the EU defenceless against dumping.

Beyond first order effects on the magnitudes of AD duties, a unilateral decision will have much wider implications, both for the EU's relations with China as well as with other countries, particularly the USA. These have to be taken into account in the decision making process. This ad hoc briefing can only be a first step towards a full understanding of the impacts of granting MES to China on EU trade policy and European welfare. The briefing illustrates that more research is required.

In-Depth Analysis: EN

In-Depth Analysis: EN

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Comparison of the EU Service Offers for the TTIP and TiSA Negotiations

Publication type Study
Date 11-12-2015
External author Christopher HARTWELL, Jan TERESIŃSKI, Bartosz RADZIKOWSKI and Karolina BEAUMONT
Policy area International Trade | Global Governance | Employment | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs
Keyword freedom to provide services | United States | liberalisation of trade | international payment | transport market | health service | building industry | market access | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | energy industry | teaching | trade agreement (EU) | social services | recognition of diplomas | GATS | communications industry | most favoured nation
Summary A comparison of the services offers which the European Union has made for the negotiations on the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) shows that, in general, both treaties follow similar approaches and points of difference are minor: both TiSA and TTIP apply a positive listing approach in regards to market access and negative listing in regards to national treatment, and the rules governing market access and national treatment do not differ between the two agreements. The most significant differences in sector-specific provisions are featured in the transport sector and educational services, while the highest harmonisation of provisions is in the energy sector and communications. Overall, the service provisions in TiSA and TTIP are very similar, although it seems that the level of trade liberalization is higher in TiSA.
Study EN

EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

Publication type At a Glance
Date 08-12-2015
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | labour law | energy cooperation | migration policy | ratification of an agreement | free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | cooperation agreement (EU) | ASEAN | Vietnam | human rights
Summary Twenty-five years after establishing diplomatic relations with Vietnam, the EU is now close to ratifying an upgraded partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) with the country. The agreement should help to cement ties between the two sides and facilitate progress towards an EU-Vietnam free trade agreement (FTA), currently under negotiation.
At a Glance ES, DE, EN, FR, IT, PL

The European Year for Development: Human Rights

Publication type Briefing
Date 01-12-2015
Author Marika LERCH
Policy area Global Governance | Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword EU aid | the EU's international role | development aid | social rights | sustainable development | civil society | political rights | human rights
Summary Human rights have become an integral part of most donors' development cooperation. In addition to their intrinsic value, human rights are considered instrumental in achieving sustainable development. Implementing the international development goals related to civil and political rights and governance will be challenging. The EU has gradually refined its policy on integrating human rights into development cooperation. The EU approach includes imposing different forms of conditionality, supporting projects and programmes, and mainstreaming human rights across development actions. Aid to governance and civil society has increased in the last decade, reaching 9 % of the EU's sector allocable aid in 2013. Implementing a rights-based approach to development will be decisive, but challenging. The European Parliament, a strong supporter of integrating human rights into development cooperation, has its own toolbox to support human rights abroad.
Briefing EN

China and climate change ahead of COP21

Publication type At a Glance
Date 26-11-2015
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Environment | Foreign Affairs
Keyword climate change | energy diversification | climate change policy | greenhouse gas | international negotiations | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change | soft energy | China
Summary China's stance on global climate change action has evolved over time, as its domestic climate policy has gained ground against an unabated focus on economic growth rates and disregard for negative externalities. Its intended nationally determined contribution (INDC), submitted to the 21st UN Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is a – still hesitant – step in support of the goal of limiting global warming to 2°C above 1990 levels.
At a Glance EN
Adoption: Cross-Border Legal Issues

This collection of briefings was prepared in view of a joint JURI-PETI Workshop organised by the Policy Department on 1 December 2015, to address legal issues related to cross-border adoptions in the EU. Presented in a first session dedicated to "Citizens' concerns and petitions on adoption cross-border legal issues in the EU", the two first papers deal with "Child protection: tensions created by the diversity of the domestic laws of EU Member States" and "The view of Ombudsmen for Children from the perspective of the Polish, European and international law". The four other briefings provided background reflections to the second session, focussed on legal issues around "Cross-border recognition of adoptions". They first approached issues of recognition in a general way ("Conflicts and Coordination of Family statuses: Towards their recognition within the EU?") turned to the "Recognition of intercountry adoptions - practical operation of the 1993 Hague Convention", further looked into limitations of the current EU legal framework and their consequences on free movement of citizens ("Cross-border recognition of domestic adoptions - obstacles to free movement") and finally examined issues around the recognition in the EU of adoptions made under non-EU legal systems ("Recognising child protection measures in the Middle Eastern legal systems as equivalents to adoption - a fresh look on Magrhebian kafala, Iranian sarparasti and Iraqi damm").

Global terrorism: trends in 2014/2015

Terrorism continues to present one of the main challenges to international stability. Despite political agreement that terrorist threat needs to be addressed jointly by the whole international community, a number of obstacles persist, including disagreements over the definition of terrorism. This latter poses a significant impediment for research on terrorism and driven for Children from the perspective of the Polish, European and international law". The four other briefings provided background reflections to the second session, focussed on legal issues around "Cross-border recognition of adoptions". They first approached issues of recognition in a general way ("Conflicts and Coordination of Family statuses: Towards their recognition within the EU?") turned to the "Recognition of intercountry adoptions - practical operation of the 1993 Hague Convention", further looked into limitations of the current EU legal framework and their consequences on free movement of citizens ("Cross-border recognition of domestic adoptions - obstacles to free movement") and finally examined issues around the recognition in the EU of adoptions made under non-EU legal systems ("Recognising child protection measures in the Middle Eastern legal systems as equivalents to adoption - a fresh look on Magrhebian kafala, Iranian sarparasti and Iraqi damm").

Myanmar/Burma: Ethnic conflict threatens unity

Myanmar/Burma faces no major external security threats; it enjoys friendly relations with its neighbours, all of which, like it, are signatories of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Internal threats are more serious, with the country racked by long-running ethnic insurgencies. Over the past few years, most of the rebels have signed ceasefires but a final peace accord remains elusive. Recent years have also seen mob violence targeting the country's Muslim minority. Resolving these issues is of crucial importance for the country's democratic transition.

Publication type
Study
Date 25-11-2015
External author
Mathew THORPE, Paweł JAROS, Gian Paolo ROMANO, Laura MARTÍNEZ-MORA, Ruth CABEZA and Nadjima YASSARI
Policy area
Keyword
Iran | Islamic law | Iraq | EU Member State | jurisdiction | adoption of a child | child protection | international law - national law | private international law | Maghreb | parental responsibility | parental authority | marital status
Summary
This collection of briefings was prepared in view of a joint JURI-PETI Workshop organised by the Policy Department on 1 December 2015, to address legal issues related to cross-border adoptions in the EU. Presented in a first session dedicated to "Citizens' concerns and petitions on adoption cross-border legal issues in the EU", the two first papers deal with "Child protection: tensions created by the diversity of the domestic laws of EU Member States" and "The view of Ombudsmen for Children from the perspective of the Polish, European and international law". The four other briefings provided background reflections to the second session, focussed on legal issues around "Cross-border recognition of adoptions". They first approached issues of recognition in a general way ("Conflicts and Coordination of Family statuses: Towards their recognition within the EU?") turned to the "Recognition of intercountry adoptions - practical operation of the 1993 Hague Convention", further looked into limitations of the current EU legal framework and their consequences on free movement of citizens ("Cross-border recognition of domestic adoptions - obstacles to free movement") and finally examined issues around the recognition in the EU of adoptions made under non-EU legal systems ("Recognising child protection measures in the Middle Eastern legal systems as equivalents to adoption - a fresh look on Magrhebian kafala, Iranian sarparasti and Iraqi damm").

Publication type
Briefing
Date 06-11-2015
Author Patryk PAWLAK
Policy area
Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Security and Defence
Keyword
database | international issue | Asia | sub-Saharan Africa | autonomous movement | common foreign and security policy | Europe | America | regional security | Oceania | North Africa | terrorism | geopolitics | Middle East
Summary
Terrorism continues to present one of the main challenges to international stability. Despite political agreement that terrorist threat needs to be addressed jointly by the whole international community, a number of obstacles persist, including disagreements over the definition of terrorism. This latter poses a significant impediment for research on terrorism and driven for Children from the perspective of the Polish, European and international law". The four other briefings provided background reflections to the second session, focussed on legal issues around "Cross-border recognition of adoptions". They first approached issues of recognition in a general way ("Conflicts and Coordination of Family statuses: Towards their recognition within the EU?") turned to the "Recognition of intercountry adoptions - practical operation of the 1993 Hague Convention", further looked into limitations of the current EU legal framework and their consequences on free movement of citizens ("Cross-border recognition of domestic adoptions - obstacles to free movement") and finally examined issues around the recognition in the EU of adoptions made under non-EU legal systems ("Recognising child protection measures in the Middle Eastern legal systems as equivalents to adoption - a fresh look on Magrhebian kafala, Iranian sarparasti and Iraqi damm").

Publication type
At a Glance
Date 22-10-2015
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area
Foreign Affairs
Keyword
establishment of peace | ethnic group | Burma/Myanmar | ethnic conflict | religious discrimination | religious group | armed forces | settlement of disputes
Summary
Myanmar/Burma faces no major external security threats; it enjoys friendly relations with its neighbours, all of which, like it, are signatories of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Internal threats are more serious, with the country racked by long-running ethnic insurgencies. Over the past few years, most of the rebels have signed ceasefires but a final peace accord remains elusive. Recent years have also seen mob violence targeting the country's Muslim minority. Resolving these issues is of crucial importance for the country's democratic transition.

At a Glance
EN
Trade, Growth and Development: An Assessment
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 24-09-2015
Author: Roberto BENDINI
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | investment policy | generalised preferences | developing countries | sustainable development | market access | World Trade Organisation | ACP countries | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Cotonou Agreement | trade agreement (EU) | economic cooperation | cooperation agreement (EU) | international trade
Summary: The European Commission communication 'Trade, Growth and Development' was published in January 2012 as a direct spin-off of the more general communication 'Trade, Growth and World Affairs'. It was also a response to the criticism levelled by many non-governmental organisations, governments of developing countries and other stakeholders at the Commission's trade policies (in particular economic partnership agreements) with traditional African, Caribbean and Pacific partners. The communication secured greater clarity and coordination between development- and trade-oriented policies, but it does not appear to have produced revolutionary changes. A number of updates have addressed the progress made by developing countries in the era of globalisation, but the essential separation remains. The communication did, however, have the unquestionable merit of promoting the modernisation of certain development-oriented trade instruments, such as the Generalised System of Preferences, and concentrating declining resources on fragile and least-developed countries.
South Korea as a global actor: The emergence of a middle-ranking power?

Publication type At a Glance
Date 18-09-2015
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword World Bank | International organisation | sustainable development | UNO | foreign policy | World Trade Organisation | OECD | South Korea | international cooperation | climate change policy | energy policy | development aid | multinational force | International Monetary Fund | armed forces | economic situation
Summary Although relatively recent, South Korea's engagement in the activities of the main international political and economic governance institutions has helped to forge and enhance the country's profile as a more influential player in global affairs.

Exceptional measures: The Shanghai stock market crash and the future of the Chinese economy

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 31-08-2015
Author Roberto BENDINI
Policy area International Trade | Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Keyword economic statistics | stock exchange | economic policy | financial policy | financial situation | market intervention | China | financial intervention | economic situation
Summary This summer has been a dramatic one for China's stocks markets, with most indices registering losses of more than 40% from their annual high. European markets have also suffered, and many observers across the globe are now nervously focused on the Asian giant whose economy drove so many other countries' in recent years. Yet the real economic significance of the drama in China may not stem from its bourses' losses; those who lost money on China's stock market are only a small percentage of its citizens, and many are simply shaving their precipitous profits, rather than facing calamitous losses. A more significant economic outcome may result from the Chinese government's efforts to intervene in its stocks markets. The measures adopted by Beijing since the sell-off began – in some cases, measures that were quickly abandoned – would be unthinkable in a fully market economy. Many measures largely contradict the government's commitments to open and transparent financial exchanges. As the liquidity that a slowing Chinese economy badly requires is frozen, it could be Beijing's heavy-handed involvement in local markets – and not their pared prices – that determines the economic fallout from the summer losses.

Japan: Foreign and Security Policy at a Crossroads

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 26-08-2015
Author Roberto BENDINI
Policy area Global Governance | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword United States | head of government | government policy | Japan | foreign policy | China | political reform | regional security | defence policy | North Korea | South Korea | military cooperation | territorial dispute
Summary On 16 July 2015, the Lower House of Japan’s Diet (the House of Representatives) approved a controversial package significantly reducing barriers to the deployment of Japanese defence forces overseas. This is the most significant change to have been made to Japan’s security and defence policy since World War II. The reforms promoted by Prime Minister Abe represent a fundamental shift in Japan’s foreign and security policy since WWII. Abe’s reforms are the logical consequence of a process of revision started more than twenty years ago with the end of the Cold War and later fuelled by the need to contest and contain the rising of China as a regional and global power. These reforms, including the reinterpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, have been undertaken in a context of constantly shifting regional balance in the Asia-Pacific region, where Japan has been increasingly threatened by both China and North Korea. This has prompted a significant upgrade in relations with the US and may pave the way for a new phase of Japanese foreign policy, but also has a negative impact on Japan’s already lukewarm relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Koreas.
India’s multilateral relations

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 17-07-2015  
**Author** Enrico D’AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** World Trade Organisation | South-South cooperation | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation | India | multilateral relations | Commonwealth | UNO | economic cooperation | economic integration | trade policy | foreign policy | Asia–Pacific economic cooperation  

**Summary**  
India, once a leader of the Non-aligned Movement, is now moving away from its non-alignment position. New Delhi now maintains relationships in different configurations with a variety of countries for different purposes (such as within the BRICS). India also increasingly engages in regional groupings. The South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is supposed to be the main tool for integration in the region, but bilateral tensions with Pakistan have jeopardised its development. New Delhi is therefore shifting towards a sub-regional grouping within SAARC and connectivity projects, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC). These projects coincide with the new ‘Act East’ policy, which builds on the previous ‘Look East’ policy, and whose key focus is represented by relations with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). By 2016 India will also join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which is focused on non-traditional security cooperation between China, Russia and other Central Asian countries. India has long lobbied for permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council, and maintains a pragmatic approach when voting in the UN General Assembly. India is also a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions. In November 2014, India achieved a remarkable diplomatic success, when it negotiated with the US the right to stockpile and subsidise staple foods for the poor – an agreement that unblocked the Trade Facilitation Agreement within the World Trade Organization.

India’s bilateral relations: First year of the Narendra Modi era

**Publication type** In-Depth Analysis  
**Date** 17-07-2015  
**Author** Enrico D’AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** Pakistan | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation | Kashmir question | India | bilateral relations | foreign policy | China | ASEAN | South-South cooperation | EU relations | economic cooperation | territorial dispute | trade policy | most favoured nation  

**Summary**  
‘Build a strong, self-reliant and self-confident India’: that was the 2014 electoral promise of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He has not wasted time, and has immediately started to work on relations with New Delhi’s immediate neighbours and with the south-eastern partners through the new ‘Act East’ policy. Major powers have showed a renewed interest in India. But while relations with Washington and other Western countries are promising, this has not come at the detriment of New Delhi's traditional ties with Moscow. A mix of mutual interest and competitiveness characterises relations with China. All this demonstrates how India's foreign policy is guided by the pragmatism necessary to gain global status. Now that Prime Minister Modi has gained trust at international level, his next challenge is to overcome internal resistance to the required major economic reforms to make India a global manufacturing hub.

China: Economic Outlook, 2015

**Publication type** In-Depth Analysis  
**Date** 15-07-2015  
**Author** Roberto BENDINI | Barbara BARONE  
**Policy area** International Trade | Global Governance | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** structural adjustment | financial market | economic growth | economic statistics | regional disparity | economic policy | property market | urbanisation | socioeconomic conditions | China | economic situation | tax reform  

**Summary**  
China stands now at a crossroads, where factors that for many years contributed to its growth have nearly – if not completely – exhausted their potential. As domestic economic challenges grow more pressing, Beijing has embarked on a new development strategy to ‘rebalance’ its economy and reinforce its integration into global markets. A number of elements of this strategy – including the ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative – are likely to have a major impact across the globe.
The EU's Trade Policy: From Gender-Blind to Gender-Sensitive?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 09-07-2015
Author: Elina VIILUP
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: common commercial policy | developing countries | liberalisation of trade | sustainable development | Ukraine | ASEAN countries | Jordan | gender equality | Latin America | China | human rights | World Trade Organisation | economic consequence | South Korea | North Africa | equal pay | globalisation | Armenia | India | position of women | Canada | G20 countries | female work | social impact | Georgia | participation of women | Moldova | trade agreement (EU) | international labour law

Summary: The services of the European Commission are currently reflecting on the follow-up to the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 (COM (2010) final). The EU's trade policy has not yet been fully integrated into this Strategy, providing an opportunity for the INTA committee to consider whether and how gender issues should be dealt with in the context of the EU's trade policies. Article 8 TFEU provides that "in all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between men and women." The trade policy issues that are discussed by the European Parliament's INTA committee can have differing gender impacts across the various sectors of the economy. Understanding the gender dimension of trade agreements better will therefore contribute to better policy making and to ensuring that both sexes can take advantage of the benefits of trade liberalisation and be protected from its negative effects.

In-Depth Analysis EN, FR

China’s Foreign Policy and External Relations

Publication type: Study
Date: 07-07-2015
External author: Matthieu BURNAY, Kolja RAUBE and Jan WOUTERS
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: Libya | Pakistan | Syria | sustainable development | Ukraine | investment abroad | ASEAN countries | China | World Trade Organisation | North Korea | UN Security Council | territorial dispute | International Monetary Fund | Iran | India | Japan | foreign policy | rule of law | economic relations | regional security | non-proliferation of arms | international sanctions | terrorism | Russia | cooperation agreement (EU)

Summary: This study provides an overview of China’s current approach to foreign policy and external relations. It focuses more particularly on the role and actions of China in global governance, its territorial claims and relations with countries in Asia, and its emergence as an important actor in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in the EU’s Eastern Neighbourhood. It assesses the implications for the EU and makes recommendations on how the EU should deepen its strategic partnership with China. The study argues that China has not made a unilateral and exclusive turn towards assertiveness in its foreign policy. China’s foreign policy assertiveness represents a policy choice that should be understood in the broader context of its external relations, which is one of uncertainty. Both the impact of China’s emergence in international affairs and the use China intends to make of its power and influence remain uncertain. This uncertainty is explained by the interdependence between a number of international and domestic factors as well as by the absence of a grand strategy. The uncertainty in China’s foreign policy opens avenues for the EU to influence China and further deepen the scope of the EU-China Strategic Partnership.

Study EN

EU-China relations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 03-07-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: investment policy | EU relations | dissemination of EU information | trade relations | directory | China

Summary: At their 17th summit in Brussels on 29 June, China and the European Union agreed to strengthen relations by seeking to boost mutual investment and increasing efforts to reach a global climate deal later this year. On his first visit to the EU institutions, Premier Li Keqiang also promised that China would contribute to the EU's new infrastructure fund. The EU and China are major trading partners, but their relations have been complicated by China's track-record on human rights as well as issues related to competition and currency policies. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the relations between China and the EU.

At a Glance EN
Developments in international climate policy

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 01-07-2015
Author: Gregor ERBACH
Policy area: Environment
Keyword: climate change | committee report | deforestation | International Energy Agency | drafting of EU law | international negotiations | reduction of gas emissions | man-made disaster | group of leading industrialised countries | summit meeting | China

Summary: UN climate talks in Bonn made only slow progress in negotiations towards a new international climate agreement, although a deal was reached to protect forests with a view to mitigating climate change. More than 40 countries have submitted pledges for post-2020 climate action. Meanwhile, the G7 called for global decarbonisation within this century, the International Energy Agency (IEA) found that global energy-related emissions could peak by 2020, Pope Francis issued an encyclical addressing climate issues, and medical experts highlighted the health benefits of climate action. The EU and China agreed to step up their cooperation on climate issues. The European Parliament's Environment Committee has been discussing an own-initiative report on the climate negotiations.

At a Glance EN

Relations between Islam and the state

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 30-06-2015
Author: Patryk PAWLAK | SEBASTIAN KUSSEROW
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Islamic law | South-East Asia | South Asia | church-State relations | North Africa | Islam | history | Middle East | Islamic State

Summary: Since its inception in the 7th century AD, Islam has been the predominant religion in a great number of political entities from North Africa to south-east Asia. The desire to organise a society according to Islamic principles has spawned very different results in the course of history – not least because interpretations of Islam have varied across the regions of the world and through the ages.

At a Glance EN

ASEAN and the EU: Time to Develop the Parliamentary Dimension of the Relationship

Publication type: Study
Date: 30-06-2015
Author: Xavier NUTTIN
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: parliamentary diplomacy | institutional structure | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation | the EU's international role | representative democracy | Asia | parliamentary assembly | interparliamentary relations | European Parliament | ASEAN

Summary: The EU is committed by Treaty to consolidate and support democracy worldwide. Parliamentary democracy is fundamental to achieve legitimacy and accountability. Moreover exchanges between parliaments enhance their role within each country and contribute to the spread of democratic values. The EU is also a staunch supporter of regional integration as a means of fostering regional stability, supporting economic growth and addressing global challenges. However, despite Asia being the world’s most dynamic region and a growing interdependence between Asia and Europe, the parliamentary dimension of the Asia-Europe relationship remains weak; Asia remains the only continent where the EP has yet to establish a region-to-region joint parliamentary assembly. The scale, complexity and diversity of Asia – which accounts for more than half of the world’s population – may explain this situation. This study first reviews the steps taken by the European Parliament to develop and strengthen relations and takes stock of the rare initiatives that were launched at the different regional levels. It then suggests that parliamentary diplomacy has not taken root yet in most Asian countries and explores the reasons for that situation, among which the respective roles of the executive and legislative branches of government. The current shortcomings in democratic governance in Asia and the lack of political support and commitment on the European side are also identified. In conclusion it argues that despite obvious difficulties there is room to advance representative democracy in Asia. As first step deeper engagement with ASEAN should be pursued and an EP-AIPA structured partnership that would support parliament's democratic objectives established.

Study EN

Source: © European Union, 2021 - EP
The Chinese Communist Party (CCP): How to explain its longevity?

Publication type Briefing
Date 29-06-2015
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword institutional structure | Communism | political situation | contemporary history | one-party system | democratisation | party organisation | economic transition | China | Communist Party

Summary With a membership of 86.7 million in 2013 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the largest political party worldwide, representing only slightly more than six per cent of the Chinese population. The CCP is the second-longest lone-ruling communist party, in one of the world’s five remaining party-states. It heads assertively towards its 100th anniversary in 2021, since contrary to numerous past forecasts of the CCP’s demise, no signs of regime change in China loom on the horizon. The CCP’s strong resilience against internal and external threats to its survival appears to result from a combination of its excellent capability to adapt flexibly to changing realities, and its iron grip on power which relies on a systematic heavy-handed approach to political opposition and peaceful dissent that could challenge its monopolistic one-party rule. Since its inception, the CCP has witnessed transformations of varying degrees of its ideology, organisational structure, governance methods, leadership style and leadership succession practice, as well as membership size and composition, which have allowed it to safeguard its legitimacy and thus its longevity. Prospects are extremely bleak for the democratisation of the party-state triggered from outside the CCP by an opposition party able to threaten the CCP’s control as the sole political party with ‘genuine influence’ in Chinese politics. Based on the CCP’s self-established status as a ‘vanguard party’, i.e. a group of communist leaders determining what is in the best interest of the Chinese people, the CCP leadership adheres strictly to the conviction that the party monitors itself, and therefore staunchly dismisses the idea of outside scrutiny. Gradual democratisation inside the party is more likely in a long-term perspective.

Conclusion of scientific cooperation agreements

Publication type At a Glance
Date 29-06-2015
Author Vincent REILLON
Policy area Research Policy
Keyword associated country | Croatia | India | scientific cooperation | freedom of movement | Framework Programme for Research and Development | Faroe Islands | cooperation agreement (EU) | Switzerland

Summary Scientific cooperation with non-EU countries aims to strengthen EU competitiveness, tackle global challenges and support the Union’s external policies. At the July 2015 part-session, the European Parliament is scheduled to vote on its consent to three international agreements for scientific cooperation between the EU and Switzerland, the Faroe Islands and India.

Cyber diplomacy: EU dialogue with third countries

Publication type Briefing
Date 29-06-2015
Author Patryk PAWLAK
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword computer crime | international security | Internet | United States | South Korea | the EU's international role | fight against crime | India | Japan | data protection | China

Summary The current global debates about the role of governments in internet governance and the application of international law in cyberspace will have significant impact on the future of the internet. With a view to shaping their outcome, the EU is focusing on a number of priority areas: protecting the digital economy, reducing cybercrime, enhancing international stability, protecting the free and open internet, and capacity-building in third countries.

The need for closer engagement with key international partners, as a way towards promoting the EU's political, economic and strategic interests was recognised in the EU Cybersecurity Strategy of 2013, and the Council Conclusions on Cyber Diplomacy adopted in February 2015. The EU is pursuing this objective through cyber dialogues with China, India, Japan, South Korea and the United States, as well as other consultation venues where cyber issues are among the agenda items.

With internet and new communications technologies becoming an integral component of everyday life, the European Parliament plays a crucial role in ensuring that internet and digital technologies strengthen, rather than undermine, human development. It can do so through legislation and agenda-setting, parliamentary diplomacy and capacity building, awareness raising and its budgetary powers.
The role of the army in China's politics

Publication type Briefing
Date 29-06-2015
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword defence policy | institutional structure | domestic policy | political situation | institutional reform | competence of the institution | interinstitutional relations | one-party system | armed forces | corruption | China
Summary With about 2.3 million troops, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), founded in 1927 as the Red Army and renamed in 1946, is the largest army in the world, although its power projection capabilities are not yet commensurate with China's regional and global status. The PLA has undergone a profound transformation from its beginnings as a revolutionary army of ground troops engaged in guerrilla warfare against enemies on Chinese territory. The post-revolutionary army is now divided into the PLA Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as the Second Artillery Force which is increasingly – although not exclusively – trained to deploy outside Chinese borders. A comprehensive modernisation process has been under way since the 1980s, including a drastic downsizing of the PLA Army, supported by a defence budget rising in double digits.

Beyond traditional national defence and military operations other than war (MOOTW), such as anti-piracy and peace-keeping missions, emergency response and disaster relief, the PLA's fundamental role within the Chinese party-state is still to act as the military wing of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and guarantor of its one-party rule. Despite this functional continuity, civil-military relations have witnessed a major change from previously symbiotic ties. A gradual bifurcation of the civil and military spheres follows a generational shift in civil and military leadership at the end of the 1980s, and the PLA's growing professionalisation.

With its specialisation increasing and its representation in the highest party bodies diminishing, the PLA seems to have lost part of its past relevance, as it becomes one political actor among many. The PLA has largely withdrawn from non-military policy-making. It has concentrated on marking defence-related foreign policy and domestic security matters with its conservative nationalism, and has gained limited autonomy from the party in technical matters. Analysts are nonetheless sceptical whether the PLA is in transition from a party-army to a genuine national army.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Publication type Briefing
Date 26-06-2015
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword enlargement of an international organisation | Pakistan | institutional structure | India | Kazakhstan | Uzbekistan | Kyrgyzstan | China | regional security | Tajikistan | Asian organisation | EU relations | energy policy | terrorism | Russia | military cooperation | economic cooperation | geopolitics
Summary With China, Russia, and four Central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – as its founding members, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is one of the world's biggest regional organisations in terms of population represented.

To date, the SCO has largely concentrated on regional non-traditional security governance and specifically its fight against regional terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious extremism. But the SCO Charter sets out a broad range of other objectives and areas of cooperation, which go far beyond security concerns and thus bear great potential for further regional integration. The SCO's main achievement thus far is to have offered its members a cooperative forum to balance their conflicting interests and to ease bilateral tensions. It has built up joint capabilities and has agreed on common approaches in the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism. However, major shortcomings, such as institutional weaknesses, a lack of common financial funds for the implementation of joint projects and conflicting national interests have prevented the SCO from achieving a higher level of regional cooperation in other areas.

A first expansion in SCO membership – expected for July 2015 – driven by new security threats, geopolitical considerations, energy security and the economic interests of current SCO members, is likely both to raise the SCO's regional and international profile and present new challenges.
China's leading role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 26-06-2015  
Author: Gisela GRIEGER  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: energy supply | regional security | Asian organisation | EU relations | autonomous movement | terrorism | Russia | economic cooperation | military cooperation | foreign policy | geopolitics | China  
Summary: China is one of the six founding members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which was established in 2001 as a regional organisation for non-traditional security cooperation between China, Russia and four Central Asian states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Although the SCO Charter sets out a broad array of objectives and potential areas of cooperation, the SCO has so far focused on, and gained most visibility through, its fight against regional terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious extremism. For China, as for the other members, the SCO represents a new and unique cooperation model, reflecting its vision of a multipolar world order as opposed to cooperation models based on US hegemony and unilateralism. Since the SCO's inception, China has pushed its agenda and has successfully pursued its national security, geopolitical and economic interests. It has used the SCO umbrella as a multilateral platform to address external threats posed by non-state actors on its vulnerable western border; to gain a strong economic and political foothold in Central Asia without putting the Sino-Russian strategic partnership at risk; and to enhance its energy security through large-scale infrastructure investment in, and trade with, the Central Asian member states. A first expansion in SCO membership, expected for July 2015, and the looming security vacuum in Afghanistan could both raise the SCO’s regional and international profile and present new challenges. For further information on the SCO as a whole, please see our companion briefing which provides an overview of the Organisation.

The Increasing Role of the EU's Culture, Education and Science Diplomacy in Asia

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis  
Date: 24-06-2015  
Author: Laurence VANDEWALLE  
Policy area: Culture | Research Policy | European Added Value | Foreign Affairs | Education  
Keyword: India | Japan | diplomatic relations | EU programme | China | cultural relations | South Korea | promotion of the European idea | scientific cooperation | cooperation in the field of education | cooperation agreement (EU) | cultural cooperation | educational exchange | Union delegation  
Summary: During the last decades, technological changes and globalisation have altered international relations. Just as the growth of telecommunications and transport technologies has facilitated the rapid dissemination of information and the global movement of people, traditional diplomacy has gradually grown to incorporate new methods, in which people-to-people contacts, networks and non-state actors play an influential role. The EU engages in cultural, education and scientific cooperation activities with most Asian countries, and particularly with China, India, Japan and South Korea.

Yet despite the diverse outreach efforts of the EU Delegations across Asia, and despite the increasing number of Asian students coming to study and research in Europe, knowledge of the EU remains scant in Asia.

EU-China Summit – building new connections

Publication type: At a Glance  
Date: 23-06-2015  
Author: Gisela GRIEGER  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | EU investment | international meeting | transport network | reduction of gas emissions | investment abroad | investment promotion | Kyoto Protocol | market access | China  
Summary: The EU-China Summit on 29 June 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of EU-China diplomatic relations. It provides an opportunity not only to take stock of progress achieved on the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, such as in the ongoing negotiations of a bilateral investment agreement, but also to identify new fields of cooperation. New dialogue mechanisms could be launched in areas such as ‘legal affairs’, including the rule of law, an area in which some Member States have already engaged in bilateral dialogue with China. Of late, China’s ‘rule by law’ concept has been high on the political agenda of the Chinese leadership. In the field of connectivity, potential synergies could be explored between China’s pan-continental ‘One Belt, One Road’ initiative and the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI), also known as the ‘Juncker plan’.

20-05-2021  
Source : © European Union, 2021 - EP
Trade and economic relations with China 2015

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 23-06-2015
Author: Roberto BENDINI | Barbara BARONE

Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs | Industry
Keyword: common commercial policy | trade statistics | trade restriction | free-trade agreement | EU Member State | investment abroad | trade volume | economic relations | anti-dumping legislation | market access | China | World Trade Organisation | foreign investment | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | import | intellectual property | export

Summary: The EU's trade and economic relations with China, the global leader in trade, are generally good, and the number of disputes reasonable. Yet the EU is dissatisfied with China's reluctance to fully implement its commitments to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and, more generally, with its protectionist measures, which often hurt EU interests. For its part, Beijing is still dissatisfied with the EU's refusal to grant the country 'market economy' status and with other measures it believes limit China's access to the Single Market.
Negotiations for an EU-China partnership and cooperation agreement, initiated in 2007, have yet to be concluded. In January 2014, China and the EU held the first round of negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement. Negotiations are progressing steadily but their end is not in sight. More recently, Beijing has suggested opening talks for an EU-China FTA, but Europe's reaction has been lukewarm.

Understanding hybrid threats

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 22-06-2015
Author: Patryk PAWLAK

Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: computer crime | North Korea | law of war | terrorism | Russia | civil war | NATO | Ukraine | border war | common foreign and security policy | China

Summary: 'Hybrid threats' are often invoked in reference to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the ISIL/Da'esh campaign in Iraq. As policy-makers struggle to grasp what hybrid threats mean for national security, it is pertinent to recall the origins, the meaning, and legal challenges associated with this concept.

Pakistan and China: 'Iron Brothers' Forever?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 18-06-2015
Author: Laurence VANDEWALLE

Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights
Keyword: Iran | Pakistan | Saudi Arabia | Kashmir question | free-trade agreement | bilateral agreement | India | investment abroad | common foreign and security policy | foreign policy | economic relations | China | regional security | Afghanistan | cross-border cooperation | development aid | national minority

Summary: The Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People's Republic of China have enjoyed long-lasting and friendly ties – despite their ideological differences, evident in their very names. The two share far more than a 520 kilometre border, as underscored by the April 2015 visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Pakistan. On that trip – his first trip abroad in 2015 – Xi announced a EUR 41.30-billion commitment to building a multi-faceted network called the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC can be understood as part of China's 'pivot to Asia' and plays a role in Beijing's broader 'One Belt One Road' initiative. If completed, the CPEC has the potential to fundamentally alter South Asia's economy and geopolitics.
Evaluation of the EU-India Strategic Partnership and the Potential for its Revitalisation

Publication type: Study  
Date: 18-06-2015  
External author: Gulshan SACHDEVA (Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India)  
Policy area: International Trade | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence  
Keyword: trade by country | Pakistan | energy cooperation | France | United Kingdom | migration | UNO | Ukraine | investment abroad | China | human rights | Italy | development policy | defence policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Germany | civil society | maritime safety | trade statistics | United States | India | renewable energy | foreign policy | economic relations | Afghanistan | scientific cooperation | terrorism | Russia | cooperation agreement (EU)  
Summary: The EU-India strategic partnership has lost momentum. Bilateral ties are not receiving sufficient priority from both sides. Economics remains at the core of this relationship. Since negotiations on the Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) may take time to be concluded, EU-India ties should not be held hostage to developments at BTIA level. On defence and security matters, India deals with EU Member States directly and has a good framework for cooperation with major European powers. The recent Indian decision to buy Rafale jets from France will also have long-term implications for EU-India links. Unlike its partnerships with the US and Russia, India has yet to discover the relevance of EU-India relations within evolving Asian security and economic architecture. Growing Indo-American relations and the close transatlantic partnership could provide new opportunities to work together. Collaboration in research and innovation has expanded significantly and dialogues on global governance, energy, counter-terrorism, migration and mobility as well as human rights all show great potential. New dialogues could be initiated on Afghanistan, maritime security, development cooperation and the Middle-East. Indian engagement in resolving the Ukraine crisis could be explored.

Study EN

 Trafficking in Human Organs

Publication type: Study  
Date: 18-06-2015  
External author: Michael BOS (Eurotransplant International Foundation, the Netherlands)  
Policy area: International Trade | Social Policy | Public Health | Human Rights  
Keyword: United States | police cooperation | organised crime | trade in organs | EU activity | European convention | shortage | India | criminal proceedings | health care profession | trafficking in human beings | organ transplant | World Health Organisation | Kosovo | UN convention | OSCE | international cooperation | Council of Europe | illicit trade | South Africa | profit | health risk | judicial cooperation  
Summary: The commercial trade in human organs, including trafficking in persons for organ removal has developed into a global problem. This report describes the current situation regarding international organ trafficking, committed often by transnational criminal networks. It zooms in on the role of traffickers, international brokers, health professionals, and the recipients and suppliers. To combat and prevent organ commercialism and trafficking, a legal framework for the criminalisation of trafficking offences, and tailor-made law enforcement instruments have been developed by a number of international organisations. A number of recent trafficking cases in which European citizens were involved, have been analysed in detail to highlight the different forms of organ trafficking and to demonstrate how investigation and prosecution can result in an effective justice response to these crimes. The efforts of the EU and other European organisations, such as the Council of Europe or the OSCE, to develop binding legal instruments and formulate policy actions to step up law enforcement and legal cooperation in the combat against trafficking in organs, are described. The report concludes with observations and recommendations for the EU to prepare next steps in successfully fighting and preventing trafficking in organs and organ commercialism.

Study EN

Cross-Cutting Effects of the EU’s Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) on Developing Economies

Publication type: Study  
Date: 15-06-2015  
External author: Christopher HARTWELL (CASE - Center for Social and Economic Research, Poland)  
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Development and Humanitarian Aid  
Keyword: preferential agreement | United States | developing countries | originating product | Morocco | Botswana | investment protection | cost-benefit analysis | agreement (EU) | World Trade Organisation | technical cooperation | technical barrier | health legislation | plant health legislation | Nepal | customs harmonisation | harmonisation of standards | intellectual property  
Summary: The world has seen rapid growth of preferential trade and investment agreements (PTAs) that, by definition, aim to go beyond the existing WTO obligations of the parties. With this growth comes the danger of incompatible obligations as these PTAs overlap within a country. This study examines the sources of overlap in various PTAs and the compliance costs that PTAs may create for a developing country, with a special focus on the agricultural realm. Examining the reality of divergent SPS standards, we conclude that better-targeted “Aid for Trade” and regulatory streamlining within the EU can help to mitigate compliance costs in developing countries. Additionally, involvement of the private sector at an earlier stage in PTA negotiations may also help to clarify compliance costs and build their mitigation into the agreements.

Study EN
Towards More Effective Global Humanitarian Action: How the EU Can Contribute

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2015

External author: Cristina Churruca Muguruzu (Institute of Human Rights, University of Deusto, NOHA Network of Universities in Humanitarian Action, Spain)

Policy area: Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights

Keyword: humanitarian aid | ECHO | Africa | the EU's international role | international meeting | Asia | financing of aid | aid evaluation | Middle East

Summary: The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in May 2016 will be the culmination of a global consultation process. The three-year initiative responds to the need to adapt the humanitarian system in order to make humanitarian action more efficient and effective in keeping pace with the rapidly changing context of emergencies. Consultations leading up to the Summit have provided the opportunity to gain perspectives from different regions of the world. As a result, three main priorities have been highlighted: the need for humanitarians to protect and preserve the dignity of people affected by conflict and disaster; a call to find innovative and sustainable ways of meeting people's needs; and a demand from the global South to 'localise' humanitarian response by strengthening local, national and regional capacities to prevent, manage and respond to crisis. There is potential for the European Union (EU) to take a leadership role in the process and influence the WHS outcome. ECHO’s new need assessment tools and the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) strategy as well as Resilience approaches offer a framework for responding to the challenges posed by protracted crises. This study recommends that the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid should be applied as a model for a ‘Global Consensus on Humanitarian Action’ or a ‘Global Compact’ recognising the diversity of today’s humanitarian response system while taking advantage of all actors’ complementary role. Furthermore, the EU and member states must commit to placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action and ensure that the EU’s humanitarian aid is not regarded as a crisis management tool, and allowed to become an instrument of its foreign policy.

Study EN

TTIP: Opportunities and Challenges in the Area of Technical Barriers to Trade, Including Standards

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2015

External author: Jacques PELKMANS


Keyword: standardisation | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | technical barrier | United States | South Korea | mutual recognition principle | free-trade agreement | Singapore

Summary: The study explores the possibilities for reducing the costs of technical barriers to trade (TBTs) between the US and the EU, found in standardisation, technical regulations and/or conformity assessment procedures and acceptance of their results. This is an important, but also challenging policy task, especially given the differences between the US and the EU. The study presents an ambitious, but without a US text, feasibility is hard to assess, given that the two systems differ considerably. A preliminary attempt to construct the US demands and some partial solutions for TTIP are discussed. The ‘living principle’ is critical for an effective TBT chapter and needs to be given time, as long as it is driven by an agreed ambitious objective of reducing TBTs as much as possible.

Study EN

G7 Summit in Schloss Elmau: A Tighter Agenda, with Wider Impact?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 10-06-2015

Author: Wanda TROSZCZYNSKA VAN GENDEREN

Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights

Keyword: United States | France | United Kingdom | President of the Commission | Japan | sustainable development | Ukraine | trade relations | Canada | foreign policy | economic relations | Italy | Germany | climate change policy | President of the European Council | energy policy | ministerial meeting | Russia | group of leading industrialised countries | summit meeting

Summary: The 7-8 June 2015 Group of Seven (G7) summit in Schloss Elmau (Germany) marked the second meeting of seven leading industrialised nations without Russia since the disbanding of the Group of Eight (G8). The group’s smaller configuration – a response to Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea – appears here to stay. The summit provided an opportunity for G7 leaders to discuss a number of topics pertaining to foreign policy, economy, health, energy, climate and sustainable development. Ukraine and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) featured prominently on the meeting’s agenda, as did discussions on to the post-2015 development and climate agendas. The revival of the G7 has served to ensure its members’ unity on key policy files, shape joint policy responses and influence EU policies and global governance, particularly through its nexus with the Group of 20 (G20), the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The German presidency of G7 has been praised its inclusive approach ahead of the summit, with consultations conducted with non-governmental stakeholders.

In-Depth Analysis EN
## Assessment of Trade Defence Policy decisions for 2014

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 10-06-2015  
**External author** Dr Edwin VERMULST  
**Policy area** International Trade | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Global Governance | Foreign Affairs | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Industry  
**Keyword** common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | planned economy | activity report | dissemination of EU information | dumping | European Commission | international trade law | anti-dumping legislation | anti-subsidy proceeding | international commercial arbitration | China  
**Summary** This paper assesses two vital issues concerning the EU’s trade defence activities. The first aspect concerns a transparency issue and the second pertains to the practical application of the trade defence instruments. On the first aspect, the paper concludes that the Annual Report issued by the European Commission to the European Parliament on trade defence activities needs a fundamental revision in terms of structure, content and timing of its issuance. Its current format fails to serve the purpose for which it was conceived in the first place. As regards the practical application of the trade defence instruments, the paper demonstrates that certain recent changes in the European Commission’s practice are target-oriented. Moreover, apart from the fact that the legality of certain practices is not assured, some of the new practices could backfire against EU exporting producers if third countries, which tend to emulate the EU’s practice, were to adopt them.

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## Civil Judicial Experts in Cross-Border Litigation: The Common Law Perspective

**Publication type** In-Depth Analysis  
**Date** 29-05-2015  
**External author** Barry Turner  
**Policy area** EU Law: Legal System and Acts  
**Keyword** judicial cooperation in civil matters in the EU | comparative law | United Kingdom | Australia | civil law | customary law | evidence | Canada | expert's report ordered by a court | civil procedure | court of civil jurisdiction | professional qualifications  
**Summary** Upon request by the JURI Committee, this in-depth analysis examines the use of expert witness evidence and testimony in cross-border legal actions and the comparison of the differing systems of law in which such litigation might take place. It further analyses how the common law system has successfully evolved to facilitate the employment of civil expert witnesses across the Member States of the European Union.

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## Nicaragua: The Chinese inter-ocean canal project

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 05-05-2015  
**Author** Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** transparency in decision-making | harbour installation | nature reserve | expropriation | protection of minorities | indigenous population | ship canal | geopolitics | environmental impact | Nicaragua | pollution from ships | China  
**Summary** On 22 December 2014, the controversial construction of a shipping route across Nicaragua to connect the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean was officially launched. With an estimated cost of US$40 to US$50 billion, the Nicaragua inter-ocean canal project could be the biggest-ever infrastructure investment in Latin America's history. The canal will be built by the Hong Kong Nicaragua Canal Development Group (HKND) and is scheduled to be operational by 2020. Opposition to the future waterway is mounting, however, as there are doubts whether the project’s calculated economic gains will outweigh the potential adverse environmental and social implications.
**China's shift to clean energies**

*Publication type: Briefing*  
*Date: 05-05-2015*  
*Author: Gisela GRIEGER*

**Policy area:** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword:** energy diversification | hydropower | solar energy | wind energy | energy law | renewable energy | sectoral planning | hydraulic energy | hydropower | China | foreign investment | energy industry | climate change policy | energy production

**Summary:** The Chinese government’s significant policy and financial support for the renewable energy sector confirmed China's world leadership in total installed renewable power capacity in 2013. For the first time China's new renewable power capacity exceeded its new fossil fuel and nuclear capacity. In 2013, China attracted more green investment than the EU28. With the rebalancing of its overall economy from an export-led to a more consumption-based growth model, the Chinese renewable energy sector is redirecting its focus from exports towards greater domestic use.

The adoption of the Renewable Energy Law (REL) in 2005 was an important turning point in China's evolving renewable energy policy. China's first regulatory framework for clean energy promotion laid the foundation for the provision of systematic support to the development of renewable energies. The 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-10) introduced a 10% target for non-fossil energy as a portion of total energy consumption for the first time. The 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-15) includes a non-fossil energy target of 11.4% and, more importantly, defines seven strategic emerging industries (SEIs) set to foster green growth and China's worldwide leadership in these sectors.

Despite this remarkably positive trend, the share of renewable energy in China's energy mix remains low, as growth in fossil fuel use continues to spur the country’s plans for a high annual growth rate of about 7%. In 2011, fossil fuels and nuclear energy together still accounted for almost 93% of primary energy consumption, while renewable energies represented only around 7%. Although domestic deployment of renewable energy technologies is gaining momentum, over-capacity in the Chinese solar and wind industries, coupled with the slowdown in renewable energy investment in the EU and US, is pushing Chinese companies to venture into new markets.

**Briefing**  
*EN*

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**Diverging views on the new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in the US and Europe**

*Publication type: At a Glance*  
*Date: 22-04-2015*  
*Author: Cemal KARAKAS*

**Policy area:** Financial and Banking Issues  
**Keyword:** World Bank | United States | EU Member State | early-stage capital | EFTA countries | economic infrastructure | geopolitics | investment bank | China

**Summary:** Infrastructure investments are an important element in international economic cooperation. Besides bilateral agreements, European donor countries often use the institutional platform given by the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to negotiate the terms of financial assistance with recipient countries. However, the dominance of these Western development and investment institutions is challenged by China, which has launched the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). While the US has taken a critical stance on this Chinese influenced infrastructure bank, some EU Member States have announced that they will support the AIIB.

**At a Glance**  
*EN*

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**Something New Out of Africa? Chinese, US and EU Strategies for the Continent**

*Publication type: In-Depth Analysis*  
*Date: 22-04-2015*  
*Author: Manuel MANRIQUE GIL*

**Policy area:** Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights  
**Keyword:** United States | the EU's international role | ACP-EU relationship | sustainable development | trade relations | economic relations | African Union | China | regional security | foreign investment | Africa | international cooperation | development aid | Cotonou Agreement | settlement of disputes

**Summary:** The seventh College-to-College meeting between the European Commission and the African Union Commission underscores the close cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Africa. Institutional and political relations have intensified in recent years, coinciding with a renewed international interest in an African continent whose economic growth in the past decade has been remarkably strong. The United States (US) and China have also recently strengthened their links with Africa. While these three actors differ in their approach to their relations with Africa in different ways, their interests converge around two broad areas: i) Africa's economic potential and the need to intensify trade and investment to generate economic growth and development; and ii) concerns about peace and security – and notably the threats posed by armed conflict and terrorist groups.

In light of this renewed international interest and other important factors – including the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020 – the European Parliament should embark on an ambitious and strategic political reflection on the EU's relations with Africa. Parliament should recognise both the potential and vulnerabilities of the continent, as well as the EU's own varied interests across policy areas. Alongside other actors, including the US and China, Parliament should also work to ensure that Africa finds its due place in the changing international order.

**In-Depth Analysis**  
*EN*
Cuba: foreign policy and security aspects

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-04-2015
Author: Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: United States | international organisation | arms industry | diplomatic relations | foreign policy | economic relations | China | Cuba | Venezuela | defence budget | international sanctions | Russia | arms trade | Brazil

Summary: Having improved economic, trade and military ties with a large number of countries, Cuba is now focusing on the recent breakthrough in its strained relations with the United States. In terms of national security, lack of finances continues to constrain Cuba's armed forces.

Comparative Study on Access to Documents (and Confidentiality Rules) in International Trade Negotiations

Publication type: Study
Date: 10-04-2015
External author: Andreas MAURER
Keyword: institutional structure | access to information | United States | parliamentary scrutiny | national parliament | EU Member State | India | comparative study | trade agreement | access to EU information | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Russia | Brazil | trade agreement (EU) | interinstitutional relations (EU) | parliamentary procedure

Summary: It is extremely difficult to strengthen parliamentary oversight of the EU’s trade policies without clear and predictable rules and procedures for the EP to access relevant information from the Commission and the Council. This study provides an overview on the rules guaranteeing access to information in international trade negotiations both in the EU and in selected third countries. It evaluates the existing arrangements on access to information by Parliament in view of the provisions included in the Treaty of Lisbon, international norms and agreements, EU case-law, and similar rules, arrangements and practices in a group of national parliaments.

The European Year for Development: Health

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 26-03-2015
Author: Marika LERCH | Eulalia CLAROS GIMENO
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Education | Public Health
Keyword: poverty | infant mortality | South Asia | sub-Saharan Africa | life expectancy | sustainable development | public health | EU aid | health expenditure | national income | development aid | disease prevention | infectious disease

Summary: Although enjoying the highest possible standard of health is a human right, millions of people suffer from preventable and curable diseases. The Millennium Development Goals strongly emphasised health, leading to increased investment in the health sector. Major progress has been made in reducing child and maternal mortality, and in combatting communicable diseases, but several regions will not meet the health targets. The Ebola outbreak has drawn attention to the need for international cooperation in health matters. The European Parliament is very conscious of the lessons learnt from the Ebola crisis. The Sustainable Development Goals are likely to include new health considerations and to propose universal health coverage. Promoting and supporting equitable access to health care is a focus of EU development cooperation. EU aid in areas such as nutrition, water and sanitation and climate change also improves health. Parliament considers health a fundamental right and has called for clear financial thresholds to ensure that sufficient EU aid goes to health and education.
Negotiating a new UN climate agreement: Challenges on the road to Paris

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 25-03-2015
Author: Gregor ERBACH
Policy area: Environment
Keyword: revision of an agreement | United States | the EU's international role | climate change policy | UN Conference | India | international negotiations | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change | China

Summary
A new international agreement to combat climate change is due to be adopted in December 2015 at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Besides actions to stop global warming, it should also cover adaptation to climate change.

The 20th Conference of Parties, which was held in Lima in December 2014, concluded with the adoption of the Lima Call for Climate Action, a document that invites all Parties (countries) to communicate their intended contributions to post-2020 climate action well before the Paris Conference.

The Lima conference left a number of important issues unresolved. First of all, the content, form and timescale of countries' contributions is not clearly specified, which will make them hard to compare and assess. It is likely that the individual contributions will not add up to the emissions reductions required to keep global warming below the internationally agreed limit of 2°C. A process for the periodic assessment and strengthening of national efforts will therefore have to be an important element of the new agreement. Another unresolved issue is the legal form of the agreement. While some negotiators favour a strong, legally binding agreement, others prefer a bottom-up approach based on voluntary contributions. Finally, issues of fairness and equity need to be addressed, acknowledging that developed countries have a greater historical responsibility for climate change and stronger capacity for taking action.

The October 2014 European Council agreed on a greenhouse-gas reduction target of at least 40% by 2030. In November, the US and China – the world's major emitters – announced targets that are less ambitious, but still considered as important building blocks to a climate agreement with global reach.

The leadership role of the EU in international climate action is being challenged by the latest developments. EU climate diplomacy will have to adapt to the new situation if the EU wants to retain its leadership role, and remain a major player in the global transition towards a zero-carbon economy and energy system.

In-Depth Analysis DE, EN, FR

Developing Operational Tools within the EU for a Comprehensive Approach to Prevent Electoral Violence

Publication type: Study
Date: 23-03-2015
External author: Holly RUTHRAUFF and Andrew BRUCE
Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights
Keyword: Democratic Republic of the Congo | Nigeria | the EU's international role | Ukraine | Council of the European Union | European Commission | Tanzania | political violence | Tunisia | conflict prevention | Philippines | European External Action Service | Burma/Myanmar | organisation of elections | fact-finding mission | Zimbabwe | election monitoring | European Parliament

Summary
This paper discusses how EU institutions can better prevent electoral violence through a more coherent approach. Brief background on the root causes and triggers of electoral violence is provided and the role of early warning and conflict analysis in planning a strategic response is considered. The paper addresses the role of EU Election Observation Missions (EOMs) in conflict situations and the need to develop other tools for expressing political support for elections in conflict-affected states, where conditions for effective observation are lacking. The paper also considers the broad range of possible responses (political and technical) that EU institutions can implement to address both long-term structural causes of electoral violence as well as short-term triggers during the election period. The paper makes a number of recommendations including: (i) a more coherent approach across EU institutions to electoral violence; (ii) much earlier attention to elections that are at risk of violence; (iii) a wider range of tools to avoid over-reliance on EU EOMs; (iv) support for a broad range of stakeholders to address both root causes and triggers of electoral violence; and (v) strengthened capacity of EU Delegations to assess the risk of electoral violence and coordinate actions to prevent and mitigate it.

Study EN

Protectionism in the G20 (2015)

Publication type: Study
Date: 09-03-2015
Author: Roberto BENDINI | Barbara BARONE
Policy area: International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | Saudi Arabia | United States | France | United Kingdom | liberalisation of trade | India | Indonesia | Japan | Canada | protectionism | Argentina | China | Italy | Mexico | Germany | South Korea | Australia | world organisation | Turkey | Russia | Brazil | South Africa

Study EN

Bangladesh: human rights situation
Publication type At a Glance
Date 06-03-2015
Author Jacques LECARTE
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword torture | UN convention | labour law | government violence | death penalty | UNO | working conditions | cooperation agreement (EU) | textile industry | Bangladesh | human rights
Summary The human rights situation in Bangladesh has been continually worsening, and what makes it even more alarming is that the state is largely responsible for this. In its September 2014 session, the European Parliament adopted a very detailed resolution expressing its deep concern over human rights violations and working conditions in the country.

India: human rights
Publication type At a Glance
Date 06-03-2015
Author Jacques LECARTE
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword poverty | freedom of expression | ethnic discrimination | government violence | India | religious discrimination | impunity | protection of minorities | women's rights | political violence | human rights | UN convention | EU relations | right to justice
Summary Although India is the world's largest democracy, its second most populous country and one of its top ten economies, this has not prevented multiple human rights abuses from remaining a fact of life in many parts of the country. In recent statements and resolutions, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament have voiced deep concern over India's human rights situation.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
Publication type At a Glance
Date 06-03-2015
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword Pakistan | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation | cooperation agreement | EU relations | economic growth | India | economic cooperation | trade agreement | summit meeting | China
Summary SAARC was founded in 1985, and is an economic and geopolitical organisation of eight countries located in southern Asia. However, the organisation has not advanced much in its three decades of existence, mainly because of the historic rivalry between India and Pakistan. This tension has blocked initiatives on several occasions, including at the November 2014 summit.

EU funding for the outermost regions
Publication type At a Glance
Date 25-02-2015
Author Vivienne HALLEUX
Policy area Regional Development
Keyword Saint Martin | French overseas department and region | EU financing arrangements | economic and social cohesion | aid to agriculture | peripheral region | Madeira | European Social Fund | Cohesion Fund | Azores | Canary Islands | European Regional Development Fund
Summary Outermost regions (ORs) are an integral part of the European Union (EU) and as such have access to all EU funding instruments and programmes. In addition, owing to their particular geographical location, they are entitled to specific treatment aimed at mitigating the impact of their structural disadvantages.

Afghanistan: human rights situation
Publication type At a Glance
Date 18-02-2015
Author Jacques LECARTE
Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword torture | freedom of expression | political situation | death penalty | position of women | women's rights | human rights | Afghanistan | ratification of an agreement | terrorism | forced migration | international convention | suicide
Summary The human rights gains made over the past 12 years in Afghanistan are increasingly under threat with a resurgence of violence, and women's rights in particular being degraded. The EU is deeply concerned by the country's deteriorating situation.
Workshop on Building Blocks of the Ubiquitous Digital Single Market

Publication type Study
Date 03-02-2015

External author Nick Sohnemann (FutureCandy, Germany), Christoph Pennings (iDate, France), Edwin Maaskant (Gartner Consulting, USA), Robert D. Atkinson (Information Technology & Innovation Foundation - ITIF, USA), Kim Soung Hie (KAIST Graduate School of IT & Media Management, South Korea), Silver Tammik (Economic Affairs at the Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU, Belgium), Anne Fleur van Veenstra (TNO Strategy & Policy, Netherlands), J. Scott Marcus (Wissenschaftliches Institut für Infrastruktur und Kommunikationsdienste, Germany) and Andreas Mitrakas (European Union Agency for Network and Information Security - ENISA, Belgium)

Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Internal Market and Customs Union | Consumer Protection

Keyword single market | electronic commerce | computer crime | Internet | South Korea | transmission network | impact of information technology | economic growth | telecommunications policy | Estonia | technological change | electronic government

Summary Digital technologies enable new disruptive business models and fundamentally improved e-government solutions. They can transform the Digital Single Market into the main engine of growth and job creation. The workshop aims at giving an overview of most advanced market and technological trends built on mobile connectivity and cloud computing. It points at Estonia and South Korea as leading jurisdictions that made the most of digital technologies both in private and public sectors. It examines net neutrality and cybersecurity as upcoming political and regulatory challenges.

Study EN

Japan’s Prime Minister wins his electoral bid

Publication type At a Glance
Date 29-01-2015

Author Lorenzo COSTANTINI

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword legislative procedure | bicameral system | early election | political parties | political situation | Japan | dissolution of parliament | election result | parliamentary election

Summary Prime Minister Shinzō Abe dissolved the lower house and called an early election in December 2014. The contest was also regarded as a referendum on his growth strategy, widely known as 'Abenomics'. Taking advantage of opposition parties’ weakness and inability to conduct a successful campaign at such short notice, and with the lowest turnout in post-war Japan, Abe’s Liberal Democratic Party emerged as the big winner, securing him a third term as premier.

At a Glance EN

Afghanistan and Central Asia: Prospects and Challenges after Withdrawal of NATO/ISAF Forces

Publication type Study
Date 27-01-2015

External author Steven BLOCKMANS (CEPS, Belgium), Rebecca DAVIS (CEPS, Belgium), Seed PARTO (Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organisation, Afghanistan), Rachel REID (Open Society Foundations) and Hekmat Khalil KARZAI (Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies, Afghanistan)

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights

Keyword humanitarian aid | governance | Afghanistan | EU aid | political situation | public safety | development aid | health aid | common foreign and security policy | aid evaluation | women's rights | economic reconstruction

Summary This publication includes a study on “Assessment of EU Support to Afghanistan for the Last Decade and Lessons Learnt for the Future”, and presentations from three experts on related subjects.

Study EN

'Make in India' for more 'made in India'

Publication type At a Glance
Date 21-01-2015

Author Enrico D’AMBROGIO

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword modernisation of industry | business start-up | bicameral system | modernisation aid | business policy | investment aid | economic growth | India | government policy | investment project | job creation

Summary Doing business in India today is much more difficult than elsewhere, but the government wants to change this. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the 'Make in India' initiative to attract investors and make India a global manufacturing hub.

At a Glance EN
### Review of regime for agriculture in the outermost regions (POSEI): Implementation Appraisal

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 21-01-2015  
**Author**: Gabriella ZANA-SZABO | Ina KRANJCEVIC  
**Policy area**: Transposition and Implementation of Law | Agriculture and Rural Development  
**Keyword**: coordination of financing | French overseas department and region | France | EU regional policy | peripheral region | EU programme | economic analysis | Spain | regional aid | economic and social cohesion | Portugal | Madeira | Azores | fund (EU) | Canary Islands | interinstitutional cooperation (EU) | agri-foodstuffs

**Summary**: This Implementation Appraisal focuses on Regulation 228/2013 on laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union and repealing Regulation 247/2006, which is the basic act for the POSEI regime. POSEI - the French acronym for Programmes d’Options Spécifiques à l’Éloignement et à l’Insularité - is a scheme that supports the incomes of farmers and the supply of essential products to the outermost regions of the European Union. The scheme compensates farmers for extra costs of production and marketing due to the small size of these territories, their topography and climate, and more difficult access to European markets. The European Parliament, as well as the EESC and CoR have repeatedly called for more involvement of the outermost regions in Structural and Cohesion Funds. Both the Parliament and the European Court of Auditors have called on Commission to monitor more regularly the effectiveness of the specific measures.

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### Regional organisations in the post-Soviet space

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 16-01-2015  
**Author**: Martin RUSSELL  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: European neighbourhood policy | international security | common market | Asian organisation | Russia | Commonwealth of Independent States | military cooperation | economic integration | trade agreement | China

**Summary**: Since the breakup of the USSR in 1991, Russia has cooperated with its neighbours through a series of regional multilateral organisations and agreements. These have served to maintain Russian influence over the 'Near Abroad' – ex-Soviet republics in Eastern Europe and Central Asia – while mitigating Russian isolation as its relations with the West become increasingly tense, not least due to the Ukrainian crisis.

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### Overview of South Korea's political landscape

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 16-01-2015  
**Author**: Lorenzo COSTANTINI  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: South Korea | unicameral system | political parties | presidential régime | head of State | democracy | position of women | trade agreement (EU)

**Summary**: Since the full democratisation of the country, with the launch of free and fair elections and the reinstatement of a functioning parliament at the end of the 1980s, South Korea’s political scene has been dominated largely by two main parties, although their names and composition have repeatedly changed. At the end of 2012, Park Geun-hye, a popular figure from the ruling conservative party, was elected the first woman president in the history of the country.

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### South Korea’s international integration

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 16-01-2015  
**Author**: Lorenzo COSTANTINI  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: international security | investment project | trade relations | economic relations | ASEAN | transport infrastructure | information technology industry | Asian Development Bank | peacekeeping | South Korea | economic growth | APEC countries | summit meeting

**Summary**: South Korea is a dynamic participant in the activities of well-established regional organisations and fora in the Asia-Pacific region. The most relevant of these is the ASEAN Plus Three, with a project for a comprehensive economic partnership which could lead to the creation of a trading bloc encompassing half of the global market. The country’s economic success is also fuelled by its popular culture spreading widely across Asia – a phenomenon known as the 'Korean wave'.

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20-05-2021  
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The Peshawar Army Public School Attack: From Nightmare to Greater Darkness?

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 18-12-2014
Author: Ulrich KAROCK
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: crime against humanity | Pakistan | United States | development aid | terrorism | NATO | EU financing | trade relations | High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy | religious fundamentalism | aid programme
Summary: Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorists killed at least 130 children, ostensibly in retaliation for a counter-terrorist military campaign that has targeted the war-struck region since June 2014. The TTP has clashed with the Pakistani army since 2002. Since October 2013, the group has declared war against the ‘un-Islamic’ Pakistani state. Operation Zarb-e-Azb – the military campaign in northwest Pakistan, was supposed to compensate for NATO’s drawdown in Afghanistan; yet it has fuelled the war in Pakistan. Pakistan is crucial for the US’s ‘war on terror’. The EU offers the country preferential trade conditions and substantial direct support. The EU may wish to emphasise the potentially counterproductive effect of Pakistani operations.

Japan's politics in the run-up to the elections

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 11-12-2014
Author: Lorenzo COSTANTINI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: national election | bicameral system | political parties | multiparty system | government | national parliament | Japan | political coalition
Summary: Japan's Liberal Democratic Party has been in power alone almost uninterruptedly for nearly four decades. Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, elected in 2013, is actively pursuing an economic growth strategy, widely known as 'Abenomics'. He decided to dissolve the lower house and call an election on 14 December 2014 to ask voters' support for his proposal of a consumption tax increase.

BRICS – a bloc or a bubble?

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-12-2014
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: UN General Assembly | India | trade relations | development bank | China | EU relations | economic interdependence | economic growth | UN Security Council | Russia | Brazil | economic cooperation | South Africa | international trade | summit meeting
Summary: BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. This heterogeneous group of five large countries each underwent dramatic economic growth in the past decade. Now they are forging links among themselves, are calling for greater recognition of their weight in international institutions and are creating a development bank. But is the group here to stay?

The BRICS Bank and Reserve Arrangement: towards a new global financial framework?

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-12-2014
Author: Wilhelm SCHOELLMANN
Policy area: Global Governance
Keyword: monetary agreement | World Bank | international organisation | international finance | India | European Investment Bank | development bank | China | monetary policy | Russia | monetary cooperation | Brazil | foreign-exchange reserves | International Monetary Fund | South Africa | share capital | financing method
Summary: At this summer’s summit held in Fortaleza, Brazil, the five countries which form the BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – agreed on the establishment of their own financial institutions: the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA). The New Development Bank is to lend for infrastructure and sustainable-development purposes, both in BRICS countries and other developing and emerging economies. In this context, developing countries are looking for a new source of financing with more flexible conditions. The CRA is an agreement among the BRICS’ central banks for mutual support during a sudden currency crisis. The agreements were signed on 15 July 2014 – after two years of negotiations – but still need to be ratified by the members’ legislatures.
ASEAN: building an Economic Community
Publication type At a Glance
Date 03-12-2014
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword common market | EU relations | political cooperation | economic development | free-trade area | trade cooperation | economic cooperation | trade relations | ASEAN countries | economic integration | trade policy | ASEAN
Summary In 2007 the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) decided to move towards closer integration by establishing an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015 as one of its three pillars (the other two being the Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Communities). What will this mean and to what extent will the AEC resemble the EU's Single Market?

At a Glance EN

ASEAN: building a Socio-Cultural Community
Publication type At a Glance
Date 03-12-2014
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword atmospheric pollution | approximation of policies | sustainable development | sustainable forest management | ASEAN countries | migrant worker | social security | ASEAN | deforestation | climate change policy | cultural identity | cooperation in the field of education | environmental cooperation | civil society
Summary In 2007 the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) launched a Socio-Cultural Community as one of three pillars (the other two being the Economic and Political-Security Communities) comprising the ASEAN Community, to be completed by 2015. This represented a new departure for ASEAN, which in the past has cooperated mainly on security and economic matters. To date, however, progress on the Socio-Cultural Community has been limited.

At a Glance EN

ASEAN: building a Political-Security Community
Publication type At a Glance
Date 02-12-2014
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword regional security | member country | EU relations | political cooperation | creation of nuclear-free zones | ASEAN countries | foreign policy | ASEAN | China | human rights
Summary Since its inception in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been a key foreign policy and security player in the region. Like the EU, it has helped to bring stability to a formerly turbulent region. In an effort to put cooperation on a more structured basis, ASEAN's 2007 Charter establishes a Political-Security Community as one of the organisation's three pillars (the other two being the Economic and Socio-Cultural Communities).

At a Glance EN

International cooperation in south-east Asia
Publication type At a Glance
Date 01-12-2014
Author Martin RUSSELL
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword EU visa policy | EU relations | political cooperation | free-trade area | creation of nuclear-free zones | ASEAN countries | economic integration | cultural cooperation | regional integration | ASEAN | Asia–Pacific economic cooperation
Summary ASEAN is southeast Asia's equivalent of the EU – an organisation which promotes regional peace and prosperity through economic and political integration. There are also several other international organisations active in the region, some established by ASEAN, others independent of it.

At a Glance EN

Nepal's political parties and the difficult road towards a new Constitution
Publication type At a Glance
Date 27-11-2014
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword national election | change of political system | EP delegation | parliamentary chamber | Tibetan question | political parties | anti-discriminatory measure | multiparty system | federalism | constitution | Nepal
Summary Nepal may well be popular worldwide for Everest climbing with Sherpa's' help, yet it remains one of the poorest countries in the world. A 10-year guerrilla conflict ended in 2006 and led to the country's transition from monarchy to republic. However, the political parties have so far been unable to reach a compromise on a new constitution, or to provide the political stability that could allow this 30-million-strong multi-ethnic country to develop its economy.

At a Glance EN
Bhutan and its political parties

Publication type At a Glance
Date 26-11-2014
Author Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword national election | ethnic group | bicameral system | India | parliamentary election | China | constitutional monarchy | change of political system | EP delegation | electoral system | interparliamentary relations | constitution | development aid | Nepal | least-developed country | Bhutan
Summary Bhutan is a long-time isolated South Asian monarchy in the Himalayan mountains between India and China. TV broadcast was only introduced in 1999, making Bhutan the last country in the world to introduce television. Bhutan gained international exposure as the initiator of the concept of Gross National Happiness. Since 2008 it is experiencing a king-driven transition from absolute monarchy to democracy.

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: Maputo+15

Publication type At a Glance
Date 25-11-2014
Author Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword mine action | United States | the EU's international role | weapons’ destruction | war victim | Russia | prohibited weapon | international convention | anti-personnel weapon | common foreign and security policy | China
Summary Fifteen years after its entry into force, the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban (APMB) Convention met again in Maputo, Mozambique, to review the Convention’s implementation and assess the remaining challenges in eradicating mines from the world.

The Development of Climate Negotiations in View of Lima (COP 20)

Publication type Study
Date 24-11-2014
External author Anke Herold, Anne Siemons, Martin Cames and Margarethe Scheffler (Öko-Institut e.V.)
Policy area Environment | Forward Planning
Keyword environmental monitoring | United States | India | Japan | China | Mexico | deforestation | Australia | climate change policy | greenhouse gas | international negotiations | Russia | Brazil | Peru | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change | South Africa | financing method
Summary This report provides an overview of the development of the negotiations within the UNFCCC since COP 19 in Warsaw. It summarises the key developments in 2014 and provides short overviews for all negotiation areas. The overview also includes a state of play of the Doha Climate Gateway and explains the position of the main Parties and negotiation groups. It is supplemented by short overviews for individual countries and stakeholder groups. This study was provided by Policy Department A for the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI).

Child under-nutrition in developing countries

Publication type At a Glance
Date 20-11-2014
Author Jacques LECARTE
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword infant mortality | developing countries | basic needs | child | Asia | subsistence farming | undernourishment | nutritional needs | Africa | development aid | hunger | World Food Programme | Unicef
Summary With 3.1 million child deaths each year in developing countries, under-nutrition is the single biggest contributor to mortality in under-fives. NGOs have pushed for the fight against child under-nutrition, and provision of universal access to adequate nutritious food, to remain one of the major targets of the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals’ agenda for both the EU and the broader international community.
China: Assimilating or radicalising Uighurs?

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 19-11-2014
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: ethnic discrimination | Muslim | freedom of religious beliefs | religious discrimination | autonomous movement | protection of minorities | repression | family policy | China | mixed marriage | independence of the judiciary | terrorism | educational system | acculturation
Summary: The Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), a restive province in China's western periphery, is populated in almost equal proportions by Turkic-speaking Uighurs and Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. The Uighurs, who are predominantly Muslim, call the region East Turkestan. Since October 2013, when China witnessed its first terrorist suicide car attack on Beijing's Tiananmen Square, for which the East Turkestan Islamic Movement claimed responsibility, the province has been haunted by a series of deadly assaults. Beijing has responded with its version of the 'war on terror' and the reinforcement of a range of policies aimed at 'better assimilating Uighurs into the mainstream Chinese society'.

Commitments Made at the Hearing of Cecilia Malmström - Commissioner-Designate

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-11-2014
Author: Pasquale DE MICCO
Policy area: Internal Market and Customs Union | Consumer Protection | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: investment policy | common commercial policy | United States | transparency in decision-making | public hearing | appointment of members | Canada | China | World Trade Organisation | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | European Commissioner | interinstitutional cooperation (EU) | international trade law | Sweden
Summary: Cecilia Malmström, the recently-confirmed European Commissioner for Trade, appeared before the European Parliament on 29 September 2014 to answer MEPs' questions. In that hearing and in her answers to the questionnaire prepared for the meeting in advance, Commissioner Malmström made a number of statements of interest to the European Parliament. This document provides a summary of her most salient points.

Japan's constitutional debate on the use of military power

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 12-11-2014
Author: Lorenzo COSTANTINI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: United States | military intervention | Japan | foreign policy | China | pacifism | defence policy | EU relations | interpretation of the law | constitution | military cooperation | territorial dispute | armed forces
Summary: Since its entry into force after the Second World War, Japan's pacifist constitution has never been amended, and any attempt to revise it has always been a major political issue. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's new foreign policy aims at a more assertive role for the country as a global actor, including in security and defence. In July 2014, his coalition government put forward a proposal to reinterpret Article 9 of the country's constitution so as to allow the exercise of the right to collective self-defence, including (for the first time) the right to defend allies if they are under attack.

Addressing the Human Rights Impact of Statelessness in the EU's External Action

Publication type: Study
Date: 12-11-2014
External author: Laura VAN WAAS (Tilburg University, The Netherlands)
Policy area: Human Rights
Keyword: aid policy | Syria | freedom of religious beliefs | Côte d'Ivoire | children's rights | gender equality | human rights | European External Action Service | stateless person | Burma/Myanmar | anti-discriminatory measure | Dominican Republic | Thailand | UNHCR
Summary: Statelessness is a significant human rights challenge: it is often a product of human rights problems, such as gender or racial discrimination, while it also has a serious and lasting impact on the enjoyment of other human rights. This study explores how the European Union can play a greater role in the fight against statelessness around the world as part of its external action on human rights issues. It demonstrates the nexus between statelessness and the EU's current human rights priorities and identifies the ways in which the EU has already contributed to addressing statelessness in its external action. The study then discusses the ways in which the EU can strengthen its contribution to the fights against statelessness through multilateral action, bilateral action and improved institutional arrangements. Finally, the paper identifies a set of three thematic and five country priorities for EU engagement on statelessness, providing recommendations for action in each case.
Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea): Kim Jong-un Softens his Punch

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 06-11-2014
Author: Roberto BENDINI | Anete BANDONE
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Security and Defence | Human Rights
Keyword: institutional structure | foreign aid | United States | political situation | foreign policy | human rights | China | humanitarian aid | North Korea | South Korea | EU relations | nuclear policy | economic situation
Summary: Kim Jong-un became the third leader in North Korea’s history, after succeeding his father Kim Jong-il, who died in December 2011. The succession took place smoothly and the new leader follows his predecessor’s repressive political line and insists on the development of a nuclear and space programme in an effort to reinforce the country’s international position and secure external aid.

Pyongyang succeeded in both launching an intercontinental rocket in December 2012 and testing its third nuclear bomb in February 2013. This caused an international outcry and resulted in more UN sanctions against the DPRK regime. The situation was normalised after China imposed severe limitations to bilateral trade and financial transactions. Since last year North Korea has softened its tone, even launching a ‘charm offensive’ to appease its opponents. Two decades after the great famine that killed more than one million people, agricultural production hardly covers the population’s nutritional needs. North Korea depends mainly on aid granted by China and some other donors for its survival. The country is also one of the most repressive in the world and holds a very poor human rights record.

In-Depth Analysis EN

European Development Fund - Joint development cooperation and the EU budget: out or in?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 05-11-2014
Author: Alessandro D’ALFONSO
Policy area: Budget | Budgetary Control | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: management audit | parliamentary scrutiny | overseas countries and territories | use of aid | powers of the EP | ACP-EU relationship | EDF | financing of aid | ACP countries | inclusion in the budget | development aid | financial regulation | general budget (EU) | budgetary discharge
Summary: As a major international actor in development cooperation, the EU has in the European Development Fund (EDF) its largest geographic instrument in this policy area, with €30.5 billion allocated to the 11th EDF for 2014-20. In recent years, around 30% of total EU spending on external assistance, including spending on both development and other categories, has been channelled through the EDF. The Fund focuses on countries and territories which have special historical ties with some Member States: the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), which receive the bulk of funding, and the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) of the EU. This publication aims to provide a general overview of the key features of the EDF, with a particular focus on the budgetary specificities of the Fund and the long-standing debate on its possible inclusion in the EU budget.

In-Depth Analysis DE, EN, FR

Cyber defence in the EU: Preparing for cyber warfare?

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 29-10-2014
Author: Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Security and Defence
Keyword: computer crime | United States | EU Member State | common security and defence policy | China | threat to national security | North Korea | South Korea | Russia | strategic defence | NATO | computer virus | data protection | Middle East
Summary: In recent years, cyber attacks on a serious scale have become a matter of concern to states, due to the threat they can pose to national security, but also a potential foreign policy and military tool to be added to existing options in their arsenals.

Briefing EN
A Cold Winter to Come? The EU Seeks Alternatives to Russian Gas

Publication type: Study
Date: 24-10-2014
Author: Pasquale DE MICCO | Lea HANNAOU-S AULAIS | Dovydas Vytautas BLAZAITIS

Policy area: Energy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Qatar | Iran | energy supply | Libya | Iraq | United States | Nigeria | import (EU) | shortage | gas pipeline | Turkmenistan | Ukraine | self-sufficiency in energy | economic sanctions | security of supply | Australia | Norway | Russia | Algeria | Azerbaijan | Mozambique | gas

Summary:
The crisis in Ukraine has led to seven rounds of sanctions between Russia and the EU – and may well lead to more. Energy is the most alarming casualty in this clash, with the EU and Russia largely interdependent in the domain. The level of dependency among EU Member States varies greatly, as does their ability to respond to Russian warnings and actions. Ukraine's gas situation is also at stake. The Russian gas exporter Gazprom ceased exporting to Ukraine in June. In late September, gas cuts were registered in Slovakia, Austria, Poland and Romania – in some cases to prevent Russian gas from being diverted to Ukraine. A provisional solution for Ukraine's winter supplies was reached in Berlin on 26 September, but has yet to be completely endorsed by Moscow and Kiev. However, the risk of gas shortages for the rest of Europe has not been averted. Military and political tensions have obliged the EU to boost its energy security mechanisms and seek alternatives to Russian gas. The European Commission has just concluded a stress test on the EU gas system to assess the impact of a potential gas crisis. Several studies have suggested that, in the short term, the EU could substitute Algerian, Norwegian and Qatari supplies for Russian gas, although this would cost more and require new gas terminals. The Union's reserves – at present 90 % full – will also help, but for how long depends on the coming winter. In the longer term, gas supplies from Azerbaijan, the United States, Iran, Mozambique, Australia, Israel and Turkmenistan could also supply the thirsty European market. EU energy policies (on renewable sources, greater efficiency, shale gas and interconnection of energy grids) could also play a role in reducing – if not completely eliminating – Europe's dependence on Russian gas.

Indonesia: human rights situation

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 23-10-2014
Author: Jacques LECARTE

Policy area: Human Rights
Keyword: torture | UN convention | EU relations | ethnic discrimination | ratification of an agreement | political situation | Indonesia | religious discrimination | repression | common foreign and security policy | women's rights | human rights

Summary:
Indonesia has the potential to become a model emerging democracy that respects human rights nationally and supports universal human rights standards across the world. Achieving this will require newly elected President Joko Widodo to take a firm stand to protect the human rights of Indonesia's marginalised groups.

China: anti-trust probes targeting foreign firms

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 22-10-2014
Author: Gisela GRIEGER

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: price agreement | dominant position | control of restrictive practices | supervisory body | administrative transparency | motor vehicle industry | trade policy | foreign enterprise | protectionism | monopoly | anti-trust legislation | China

Summary:
Since 2013, China's anti-trust regulators have drastically stepped up the enforcement of China's competition law against foreign firms. Major EU and Japanese automobile companies have recently been heavily fined for alleged price-fixing and monopolistic conduct.
Will the Afghan Government Deal Provide the Country the Stability it Needs?

**Publication type** | In-Depth Analysis  
**Date** | 21-10-2014  
**Author** | Fernando GARCES DE LOS FAYOS TOURNAN  
**Policy area** | Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence | Human Rights  
**Keyword** | United States | electoral fraud | political situation | bilateral agreement | common foreign and security policy | corruption | presidential election | human rights | regional security | Afghanistan | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | public safety | NATO | cooperation agreement (EU) | political coalition  
**Summary** | A dangerous political crisis ignited in Afghanistan this year – just months before the International Security Assistance Force was to be replaced by a reduced US and NATO force. Both presidential candidates, Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, alleged that the second, June round of the presidential elections had been marred by fraud. A power-sharing agreement was finally reached between President Ghani and ‘CEO’ Abdullah in September, following intense international pressure. The outcome has frustrated the Afghan people, whose high turnout at the poll, despite high security risks, demonstrated a real commitment to democracy. Turnout in the 2015 parliamentary elections will suggest whether voters’ disappointment persists. Providing a minimum of security to the population and to international agencies will be the new government's highest priority. Violent attacks are on the rise, though government camps may disagree on whether and how to negotiate with the Taliban insurgency. Disputes about the appointments of high officials from different political and ethnic groups may also distract Ghani from one of his principal goals: fighting corruption. The European Parliament could ask the EU to reinforce its support for the new government and reiterate its call that a new EU-Afghan agreement stress democracy and human rights – particularly those of women.

India: the biggest democracy in the world

**Publication type** | At a Glance  
**Date** | 16-10-2014  
**Author** | Enrico D'AMBROGIO  
**Policy area** | Democracy | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** | national election | bicameral system | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | EP delegation | political parties | national parliament | free-trade agreement | India | democracy | parliamentary system  
**Summary** | With 1.267 million inhabitants, of which 834 million can vote, India is the largest democracy in the world. India is an authentic multicultural country: in Lok Sabha, the lower house, members can speak in 15 different languages!

Pakistan: human rights situation

**Publication type** | At a Glance  
**Date** | 16-10-2014  
**Author** | Jacques LECARTE  
**Policy area** | International Trade | Human Rights  
**Keyword** | Pakistan | death penalty | religious discrimination | freedom of the press | position of women | women's rights | child labour | children's rights | human rights | UN convention | forced disappearance | cooperation agreement (EU) | religious group | religious fundamentalism  
**Summary** | Human rights abuse is one of the most complex and challenging issues in Pakistan today. The EU has expressed concerns about the human rights situation and monitors events closely.

Hong Kong: one country, two systems?

**Publication type** | At a Glance  
**Date** | 15-10-2014  
**Author** | Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area** | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** | autonomy | Hong Kong | political system | United Kingdom | civil disobedience | electoral reform | political rights | universal suffrage | China  
**Summary** | China's refusal to allow open nominations for the election of Hong Kong's next chief executive sparked the Umbrella Revolution, with thousands taking to the streets. But with the protests now dissipating, the situation appears to have moved little.
**CFSP/CSDP: Outcome of the NATO Summit 2014**

Publication type: At a Glance

Date: 08-10-2014

Author: Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG

Policy area: Budgetary Control

Keyword: Afghanistan | European security | territorial law | defence expenditure | Russia | NATO | military cooperation | Ukraine | EU-NATO cooperation | summit meeting | stationing of forces

Summary: NATO leaders meeting in Newport, Wales (4-5 September 2014) addressed essential questions dealing with the current European security situation, the withdrawal from Afghanistan and declining defence budgets. The next NATO Summit will take place in Warsaw, Poland in 2016.

At a Glance EN

**Ahead of the 10th ASEM Summit**

Publication type: At a Glance

Date: 03-10-2014

Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs

Keyword: regional security | trade statistics | the EU's international role | climate change policy | free-trade agreement | Asia | trade relations | common foreign and security policy | summit meeting

Summary: The 10th ASEM summit will take place in Milan, Italy on 16 and 17 October 2014. The 51 members will come together under the theme 'Responsible Partnership for Sustainable Growth and Security', with the forum also seeking to enhance its impact and visibility.

At a Glance EN

**Universal Suffrage in Hong Kong Acquires Chinese Characteristics**

Publication type: Briefing

Date: 15-09-2014

Author: Marika ARMANOVICA

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword: Macao | Hong Kong | UN international covenant | political situation | organisation of elections | Taiwan | electoral reform | political unrest | democratisation | political rights | China

Summary: China’s legislature, the People’s National Congress (NPC), has made recommendations about the 2017 direct election of Hong Kong’s Chief Executive, foreseen in Hong Kong’s constitution. Hong Kong’s legislature could reject the recommendations, although the NPC has final say. China’s authorities have warned that civil disobedience and protestors’ calls to respect international standards may have serious consequences. The European Parliament has called for international standards to be respected in Hong Kong's politics. The selection of candidates will be less free. A candidate will now need to gain the support of at least 50% of the nomination committee, instead of the 12.5% required in 2012. During public consultations, a number of initiatives were proposed to make the nomination process more democratic. Beijing has insisted that Hong Kong's administrators respect their nation and support China's jurisdiction over Hong Kong. The events in Hong Kong have been echoed in Macao. Beijing sees its relations with Hong Kong as a model for Taiwan, which it also hopes to incorporate into a 'one China, two systems' arrangement. In the past, the European Parliament has adopted positions on electoral reform in Hong Kong. The EP has stated that 'respect for the full autonomy of Hong Kong is one of the key issues upon which to base the development of future relations between the EU and China'.

Briefing EN

**Helping – or Not – European Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) Venture Abroad**

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis

Date: 15-09-2014

Author: Elfriede BIERBRAUER

Policy area: Budget | European Added Value | International Trade | Budgetary Control | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Internal Market and Customs Union | Consumer Protection

Keyword: common commercial policy | aid to undertakings | operation of the Institutions | Asia | trade promotion | EU financing | investment abroad | EU programme | small and medium-sized enterprises | market access | Latin America

Summary: Various EU initiatives to supporting the internationalisation of European SMEs fall short of the European Parliament's expectations. Although independent evaluations of the European Business Centres in India, China and Thailand suggested that bold decisions were necessary, the European Commission has only adopted some changes to the measures. Using budget appropriations from the previous budget framework, the Commission plans to support the current structures until the end of their contracts – which have been extended in some cases. The Commission also plans to geographically extend its business support in third countries – also financed by the ICI+ programme. Under the EU’s budgetary procedure, the European Parliament has only oversight over the implementation of inefficient structures. As Member States require tailor-made support to turn-around declining exports, small and medium-sized enterprises should first be supported through the Member States, and then perhaps by the EU.

In-Depth Analysis EN
The Struggle for the Control of East China Sea
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 27-08-2014
Author: Roberto BENDINI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: United States | territorial waters | natural gas | oilfield | Japan | Taiwan | China | UN convention | Pacific Ocean | territorial law | exclusive economic zone | contiguous zone | territorial dispute | air space | archipelago
Summary: A dispute that has simmered for more than 40 years between Japan and China (and Taiwan) has flared up, bringing Beijing and Tokyo close to a potentially devastating armed confrontation. At issue is the control of small, uninhabited islands in the East China Sea, known by the Japanese as the Senkaku Islands and by the Chinese as the Diaoyu Islands.

In recent years China has radically changed its approach, moving from the relatively moderate and reasonable attitude to world affairs it had adopted for decades to a very assertive foreign policy aimed at, inter alia, bolstering its military and political role in Asia and securing key strategic positions off its coastline. China has unilaterally attempted to modify the status quo in the region to conform to an old vision of Asia, in which Imperial China played a hegemonic role. With increasing frequency, China's Communist Party has played the 'nationalism' card to bolster its domestic legitimacy.

For its part, Japan appears unready to accept the Chinese claim over the desolate, barren archipelago, and has refused even to acknowledge the dispute's existence. The quarrel has resuscitated nationalist sentiments in an otherwise pacifist Japan, even leading to a revision of the constitution to allow the Japanese armed forces to assist allies, and to an expansion of the country's military cooperation with the US.

In-Depth Analysis EN

Workers' conditions in the textile and clothing sector: just an Asian affair? Issues at stake after the Rana Plaza tragedy
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 15-08-2014
Author: Enrico D'AMBROGIO
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: common commercial policy | generalised preferences | corporate social responsibility | Asia | working conditions | audit | human rights | labour inspectorate | multinational enterprise | international labour law | trade union freedom | international convention | textile industry
Summary: More than 70% of EU imports of textile and clothing come from Asia. Many Asian workers have to work in sweatshop conditions, but the issue appears in global media only when major fatal accidents occur, like that at Rana Plaza in Bangladesh, in 2013. Long working hours, low wages, lack of regular contracts, and systemically hazardous conditions are often reported. Trade unions, when allowed, are unable to protect workers.

Briefing EN

EU and US Trade Policy and its Global Implications (TPP, TTIP and China)
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 07-07-2014
Author: Roberto BENDINI | Jakub PRZETACZNIK
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | trade by country | economic consequence | United States | liberalisation of trade | free-trade agreement | trade agreement (EU) | trade policy | foreign policy | geopolitics | China
Summary: The focus of US foreign policy has shifted to Asia in a dramatic way. With the 'pivot' strategy, the US intends to reaffirm its political role in the region and secure a stronger economic position, not least by concluding an ambitious Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. The new strategy will inevitably have an impact on China, and may be seen as a US response to China's increasing assertiveness in world affairs. As a result of the global economic crisis, the US has also adopted a forward-looking foreign trade strategy aimed at rebalancing external deficits, create new jobs and increase industrial production in the US. In pursuing these economic aims, the US has essentially turned towards Asia, apparently at the expense of its preferential relations with the EU.

With the launch of the US-EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) in 2013, the scenario changed dramatically, with the US negotiating two major deals at the same time. Its economic focus notwithstanding, the TTIP has strong and obvious political implications that are not without risks for the EU.

In this context, China faces a serious dilemma. As joining the TPP on the conditions set by the US does not seem to be a viable solution, Beijing is left with two alternatives: to strengthen it hold over Asian economies or to conclude an ambitious deal with the EU. Both options are feasible, but neither is without consequences.
The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative: state of play

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 24-06-2014
Author: Gisela GRIEGER

Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: self-regulation | institutional structure | corporate governance | publication of accounts | India | business ethics | administrative transparency | corruption | China | oil industry | mining industry | Russia | Brazil | gas industry | South Africa

Summary: In 2003, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) was launched as a voluntary multi-stakeholder initiative for the extractive industries, bringing together governments, industry and civil society. Its main objective has been to create a global transparency standard which allows light to be shed on all payments made by extractive-industry companies to governments of resource-rich developing countries, and to cross-check all revenues received by these governments from the industry.

Briefing EN

India’s 2014 Legislative Elections: The Lack of Economic Miracles Lands the Congress Party on the Opposition Benches

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 27-05-2014
Author: Laurence VANDEWALLE | Elfriede BIERBRAUER

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: head of government | national election | free-trade agreement | government policy | economic development | India | election result | foreign policy | parliamentary election | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | political coalition | political majority | election campaign

Summary: The EU’s relationship with India and the floundering bilateral trade negotiations may be reinvigorated by the results of the country’s elections for India’s lower house of parliament – the Lok Sabha – held between 7 April and 12 May 2014. The landslide victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leader, Narendra Modi, at the expense of the Congress party; after being in power for all but 18 years since the country’s independence in 1947, Congress obtained only 44 seats – less than 8% of the total – in the recent ballot. The new Common People’s Party, which performed well in 2013-regional elections in the capital, Delhi, obtained only four seats nationwide.

Briefing EN

Chinese investment in the EU

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 23-05-2014
Author: Laine SKOBA

Policy area: International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: economic independence | economic consequence | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | direct investment | investment abroad | investment promotion | market access | globalisation | China

Summary: From ports to cars to food processing, China’s foreign direct investment (FDI) in the EU concerns a wide variety of economy sectors. Negotiations on an EU-China bilateral investment treaty were launched in 2013, to ensure more reciprocity in business relationships.

Briefing EN

Civil Society and Media in Myanmar/Burma’s Political Transition

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 22-05-2014
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA

Policy area: Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights
Keyword: governance | establishment of peace | access to information | non-governmental organisation | Burma/Myanmar | EU financial instrument | constitutional revision | development aid | interparliamentary relations | freedom of the press | democratisation | civil society

Summary: Since Myanmar/Burma launched its political transition began in 2011, civil society in the country has become more active and more visible. The parliament has opened its doors to voices from the outside – although hesitantly and on ad hoc basis. Non-state actors are now involved in revising the constitution, and the result will be pivotal for the credibility of the general elections in 2015 and, by extension, the fate of the country’s democracy. The media in Myanmar/Burma have played an important role in making political processes more transparent. Yet journalists still work in climate of uncertainty and intimidation, while unclear legal provisions discourage the free expression of opinion, especially on the internet. In 2013, the EU adopted a comprehensive framework to support democratic, peace and development in Myanmar/Burma. To attain the policy’s objectives, the country’s diverse and dynamic civil society must be closely involved.

Briefing EN
**Trade and Economic Relations with China 2014**

**Summary**

Although China managed to sustain its previous year's level of economic growth in 2013, its economy is headed towards further change and possible upheaval. Beijing has accordingly widened its focus, and is no longer concentrating solely on economic growth. Inflation remained stable in the country. However, falling producer prices present challenges for Chinese production. The real estate bubble and growing debt are threatening the country's economic stability. Beijing has liberalised a number of areas, reinforcing perceptions that the country is moving towards a market economy.

The EU's trade and economic relations with China, the largest trading nation in the world, are generally good, and the number of disputes reasonable. However, the EU is dissatisfied with China's reluctance to fully implement its WTO commitments and, more generally, with its protectionist measures, which hurt EU interests. For its part, Beijing is still dissatisfied with the EU's refusal to grant the country 'market economy' status. The two parties recently settled three majors trade defence cases (solar panels, wine and polysilicon), which poisoned bilateral trade relations during the last year.

Negotiations for an EU-China partnership and cooperation agreement, initiated in 2007, have yet to be concluded. In January 2014, China and the EU held the first round of negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement. Beijing has also recently offered to open talks for an EU-China FTA, but Europe's reaction has been lukewarm.

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**Higher Education Entrance Qualifications and Exams in Europe: A Comparison**

**Summary**

The study analyses admission systems to higher education across ten countries, covering some countries of the European Union (France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom), a candidate country (Turkey) as well as commonly used international comparators (Australia, Japan and the US). These countries are compared on three axes: the equity of admissions, their quality and their ability to encourage students' mobility. On this basis, recommendations are provided with regard to admission to higher education in Europe.

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**OECD Factbook**

**Summary**

OECD's dynamic and comprehensive statistical annual showing a wide range of key statistics for its member countries and major additional countries. For each indicator presented, there is explanatory text including a definition, explanation of long-term trends, and references; a table showing the indicator over a significant time span for all countries covered, and graphics showing the key messages contained in the data.

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European Union Development Strategy in the Pacific

Publication type: Study
Date: 28-04-2014

External author: Elodie FACHE (Aix-Marseille University, France), Toon VAN MEIJL (Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands), Sue FARRAN (Northumbria University, the UK) and Michael GOLDSMITH (Waikato University, New Zealand)

Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: island region | aid system | countries of the Pacific Community | ACP-EU relationship | EDF | economic planning | development policy | Pacific Islands Forum | Oceania | Cotonou Agreement | adaptation to climate change | geopolitics | Union delegation

Summary: Development in the Pacific region is uneven, multi-layered and challenging. The European Union’s development cooperation with the Pacific is significant; in fact the EU is the second largest donor of development assistance to the region. This study, implemented by the European Consortium for Pacific Studies, analyses the current and future contexts for European Union engagement in development cooperation with the Pacific, and proposes elements of a renewed EU development strategy for the region. From a Pacific perspective, the question of defining a new EU development strategy is as much a matter of defining new and equal partnerships through which Pacific development strategies can be supported.

Rising to the challenge of re-imagining EU-Pacific relations will require a good deal of work and reflection. The Pacific clearly constitutes a geopolitical context whose importance is markedly set to grow in significance, and there is a clear rationale for the EU to commit further resources to support its interests and activities in the region. In particular, the EU should enhance and deepen its institutional knowledge and means of drawing upon existing expertise on ‘Pacific Ways’.

Study EN, FR

Controversial issues in EU-India trade: Disputes at WTO level

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 25-04-2014

Author: Laine SKOBA
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | generic drug | suspension of customs duties | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | liberalisation of trade | India | anti-dumping measure | trade relations | customs transit | intellectual property | import tax

Summary: Despite long-running negotiations, there appears little prospect that the EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement will be signed in 2014. Pending such an agreement, EU-India trade relations are regulated under their WTO commitments. Several recent disputes between India and the EU at WTO level illustrate the difficulties faced in the trading relationship.

Briefing EN

The Impact of Remittances on Developing Countries

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-04-2014

External author: Karine Manyonga Kamuleta LUBAMBU (International Organization for Migration, Switzerland)
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: poverty | developing countries | Internet site | data collection | financing of aid | financial services | impact study | economic consequence | foreign investment | ACP countries | balance of payments | capital transfer | development aid | export of capital | financial legislation

Summary: The crisis that hit the western financial markets in 2008 has led to a severe global economic recession, which impacted and is still impacting migrants and migration policies worldwide. Despite the growing vulnerability of migrants, remittances have remained stable during and after the global economic downturn. Indeed, they continue to be a significant source of income for families and play a crucial role of co-insurance or risk mitigation in times of hardship. Moreover, remittances have proven to be a more sustainable source of foreign currency for developing countries than other capital inflows such as foreign direct investment, public debt or official development assistance. However, the nexus between remittances and development remains complex, especially with regards to the movement of people, which contributes to the spread of global interdependence at all levels – social, economic and political.

Study EN

EU-Japan: forging strategic ties

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 10-04-2014

Author: Enrico D’AMBROGIO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: public contract | cooperation policy | free-trade agreement | liberalisation of trade | export (EU) | Japan | agricultural trade | foreign policy | market access | defence policy | economic policy | territorial dispute | association agreement (EU)

Summary: The EU and Japan share common values and principles and enjoy solid, long-term political and economic ties. Both sides believe the time has come to develop the large and unexploited potential in their relationship. Therefore, the EU and Japan are currently negotiating two agreements: a Strategic Partnership Agreement and an Economic Partnership Agreement/Free Trade Agreement.

At a Glance EN
Methanol: A Future Transport Fuel Based on Hydrogen and Carbon Dioxide?

**Summary**
This study discusses the technological, environmental and economic barriers for producing methanol from carbon dioxide, as well as the possible uses of methanol in car transport in Europe. Costs and benefits are evaluated from a life-cycle perspective in order to compare different feedstocks for methanol production and to account for the potential benefits of CO2-derived methanol in the transition to a more diversified fuel mix in the transport sector. Benefits in terms of reduced dependence on conventional fossil fuels and lower risks to security of supply can be envisioned in the medium and long term. It is nonetheless evident that considerable and sustained research efforts are necessary to turn CO2 into an efficient and competitive prime materials, which would be attractive not only for the transport sector, but also other industries. Europe's increasingly limited and expensive access to fossil fuels makes it obligatory to consider policy options and smart strategies, combining market, regulatory and planning instruments, to bring down the direct and indirect costs of alternative fuels, so that transport services remain affordable for citizens and companies during the transition to a less petroleum-dependent economy.

**Executive summary**
*ES, CS, DE, EL, EN, FR, IT, HU, PT, RO, SV*

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The WTO Rules against China on Measures Limiting Export of Rare Earths

**Summary**
On 26 March 2014, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) circulated a report on the dispute about China’s rules on the exports of rare earths. The dispute had been initiated by complaints from the EU and Japan, with another 16 countries participating as third parties in the proceedings. In the report, a WTO dispute settlement panel concluded that Beijing had breached international trade rules by applying restrictions on its exports of various forms of rare earths, tungsten and molybdenum. Rare earths are a set of strategic minerals necessary to produce modern smartphones, cameras and hybrid cars.

The WTO ruling is not definitive, and China has 60 days to appeal. It is, however, unlikely that the organisation’s Appellate Body will reverse the decision taken by the dispute settlement panel. If Beijing does not comply, this may pave the way to imposing retaliatory measures against products exported by China.

**Briefing**
*EN*
Reshoring of EU manufacturing
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 21-03-2014
Author: Christopher NEEDHAM
Policy area: Industry
Keyword: cost analysis, business policy, location of industry, production cost, processing industry, international competition, economic analysis, China
Summary: Rising costs in formerly low-cost countries, and particularly China, have recently brought reshoring – bringing back manufacturing – to the fore. The hope is for a return of the many jobs that left the EU from the 1980s through to the 2000s.

Possibility and Terms for Applying Brussels I Regulation (Recast) to Extra-European Disputes
Publication type: Study
Date: 14-03-2014
External author: Swiss Institute of Comparative Law: Lukas HECKENDORF URSCHELER, Ilaria PRETELLI, Andreas FÖTSCHL, Josef SKALA, Daria SOLENIK, Martin SYCHOLD and Raffaella DI IORIO;
University of Lausanne: Andrea BONOMI;
University of Urbino “Carlo Bo”: Luigi MARI;
Kyushu University: Yuko NISHITANI;
University of Geneva: Gian Paolo ROMANO
Policy area: Public international law, Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters, EU Law: Legal System and Acts
Keyword: comparative law, EU relations, enforcement of ruling, EU Member State, civil proceedings, jurisdiction, Japan, courts and tribunals, judicial cooperation, Switzerland, European private law
Summary: Upon request by the JURI Committee, this study provides an analysis of improvements to European rules on jurisdiction and enforcement of judgments. It concerns, in particular, disputes connected to third (non-EU) States by virtue of the domicile of the defendant or as a result of a connecting factor that the European Union considers as a ground for exclusive jurisdiction where it points towards the courts of a Member State. In summary, the research is aimed at determining the external boundaries of the European Union’s jurisdiction. Moreover, the study explores the possibilities open to the European Union for achieving the best possible coordination in the exercise of jurisdiction with its economic partners. More specifically, a two-step progression is suggested: first, the unilateral introduction of specific rules of coordination - via the adoption of legislation setting out specific jurisdiction rules for non-EU disputes – and, secondly, the promotion of international conventions with third States, so as to coordinate EU and non-EU private international law systems and in order to attain a higher degree of legal certainty for EU and non-EU litigators.

Best Practice in the Use of Rights-Based Management to Reduce Discards in Mixed Fisheries
Publication type: Study
Date: 14-03-2014
External author: Ragnar Arnason (Department of Economics University of Iceland, Iceland)
Policy area: Fisheries
Keyword: New Zealand, fishing rights, United States, Norway, Namibia, Iceland, fishery management, discarded fish, common fisheries policy, catch quota
Summary: Rights-based fisheries management systems alter the incentives for discarding and harvesting selectivity compared to the alternatives. Nations that have adopted individual transferable quotas (ITQs) in their fisheries generally have comparatively low discard rates. This is partly due to the attributes of the ITQ system and partly due to clever methods adopted by these nations in order to reduce discards in their fisheries.

Technical Development and Deployment of Alcohol Interlocks in Road Safety Policy
Publication type: Study
Date: 14-03-2014
External author: Angelo Martino, Alessio Sitran and Caterina Rosa (TRT Trasporti e Territorio Srl)
Policy area: Transport, Public Health
Keyword: safety device, alcoholism, United States, road safety, accident prevention, Australia, Canada, cost-effectiveness analysis, transport accident, technical specification
Summary: This study presents a discussion on alcohol interlocks in terms of their use, effectiveness and contribution to road safety. While summarising the most recent road safety developments and providing an account of the drink-driving phenomenon, the study outlines the technical requirements for the use of these devices and the various methods of use currently established in EU Member States. The study concludes with an analysis of their cost-effectiveness in relation to their deployment in the commercial road transport sector and specific users categories.

Executive summary: EN

Source: © European Union, 2021 - EP
Evaluation of the EU's Human Rights Policies and Engagement in Central Asia

Publication type: Study
Date: 11-03-2014
External author: Jos BOONSTRA (Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior - FRIDE, Spain), Tika TSERTSVADZE (Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior - FRIDE, Spain) and Vera AXYONOVA (Fulda University of Applied Sciences, EUCAM, Germany)

Policy area: Financial and Banking Issues | Human Rights
Keyword: Central Asia | EU relations | the EU's international role | cooperation policy | EU financing | democratisation | civil society | rule of law | human rights

Summary: EU relations with the five Central Asian countries were upgraded in 2007 through the establishment of the 'EU and Central Asia: Strategy for New Partnership'. This brought about hope for a meaningful and coherent EU engagement in the region. One of the EU's main priorities in Central Asia is to advance and promote human rights, good governance, the rule of law, and democratisation. This objective has been supported by various policy and financial instruments. While the overall financial assistance, and in particular funding for democracy- and human rights-related projects, remains limited, the existing support has mostly sought to tackle technical problems in the judicial sector, including prison reform, leaving deeper shortcomings in the promotion and protection of human rights untouched. So far, the EU has had little impact on Central Asia's human rights record, due to the region’s deeply embedded authoritarian rule, as well as the EU's limited leverage and its own inconsistencies and inadequate follow-up in implementing values-related policies and projects.

Kingdom of Thailand: A Distressing Standoff

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 26-02-2014
Author: Manika ARMANOVICA

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: EU relations | early election | political situation | political crisis | democracy | Thailand | common foreign and security policy | foreign policy | social situation | rule of law | economic situation | human rights

Summary: Snap elections for Thailand's House of Representatives were held on 2 February 2014 against a backdrop of public demonstrations, violence and political polarisation. Rather than end the crisis, the ballot has further enflamed the tense situation in the country, and re-run elections have yet to be completed in some constituencies. Between the 2011 general elections, won by the Pheu Thai Party (PTP), and November 2013, Thailand experienced a period of superficial calm. Yet, the divisions between PTP, backed by Thailand's rural communities, and the opposition, supported mainly by Bangkok's middle class and by constituencies in the south, remained irreconcilable. The fragile political peace was broken when the government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's introduced an amnesty bill that would have allowed her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra (deposed in 2006), to return from exile without being imprisoned for corruption.

In-Depth Analysis EN

Economic Policy Reforms: Going for Growth

Publication type: Study
Date: 21-02-2014
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: investment policy | labour market | education policy | economic growth | employment policy | fiscal policy | innovation | trade policy

Summary: The Going for Growth framework builds on OECD expertise on structural policy reforms and economic performance to provide policymakers with concrete reform recommendations to boost growth. Five policy priorities have been identified for each country, based on their ability to improve long-term material living standards through higher productivity and employment. The structural reform priorities broadly cover product and labour market regulation, education and training, tax and benefit systems, trade and investment rules and innovation policies. Going for Growth reports have been published annually for OECD countries since 2005 and since 2011 have also included Brazil, China India, Indonesia, Russia and South Africa (BRIICS). They are contributing to the G20 regular work programme to achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth.
EU-Indonesia agreement on trade in legal timber

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 20-02-2014
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: trade by product | export monitoring | surveillance concerning imports | import (EU) | rights of minorities | illicit trade | Indonesia | forestry legislation | wood product | export licence | indigenous population | forestry holding
Summary: The EU-Indonesia Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) was signed on 30 September 2013. It is the first FLEGT VPA the EU has made with an Asian timber-exporting country; VPAs with Malaysia and Vietnam are likely to follow. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format. Available language versions:

Afghan opium production reaches record high

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 15-01-2014
Author: Martin PETERSEN
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: plantation | Afghanistan | crop production | alternative agricultural production | agricultural productivity | drug traffic | farmer | rural development | drug addiction
Summary: Afghan opium production increased 49% in 2013, reaching a record high. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), potential production was even higher, limited only by unfavourable weather conditions, while eradication efforts diminished. The drug trade helps sustain the military conflict and, with presidential elections in 2014 as well as the planned draw-down of foreign troops, it could contribute to an escalation in coming years.

Another Day of Protests in Bangkok, with No Compromise in Sight

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 15-01-2014
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA
Policy area: Democracy
Keyword: early election | political situation | constitutional revision | barring of penalties by limitation | political unrest | Thailand | political violence
Summary: The European Union has called on all parties to seize the opportunity offered by the proposed early elections. Since 2011, Thailand’s government has restored stability and defused tensions… at least on the surface. Yet, the possibility of a new crisis was never excluded. Reforms proposed by the current Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, have proved controversial within her party and among the opposition. Yingluck withdrew support to a controversial amnesty bill after the Senate rejected it, but failed to stop the brewing conflict. Thailand's Constitutional Court also ruled that the government’s attempts to re-establish a fully elected Senate were unconstitutional. Despite Yingluck’s dissolution of the Parliament, protestors have continued to demonstrate, demanding the establishment of an unelected ‘people’s council’. Even if a short-term solution can be found, stability will be hard to achieve without a broad discussion on the political order.

Fisheries in Japan

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-01-2014
Author: Irina POPESCU
Policy area: Fisheries
Keyword: economic consequence | trade by product | earthquake | fisheries structure | catch of fish | Japan | nuclear accident | fishing controls | fishery management | fishing industry | aquaculture | fishery research
Summary: Japan is one of the world's most important consumers of fishery products. Fisheries traditionally play a considerable role in its food supply and form a key element of the regional economies in coastal areas. Japan has developed its own set of values and habits in terms of fisheries practices, along with an elaborate fisheries management system. This note provides an overview of fisheries activities in Japan and reviews some specific aspects of this highly complex sector.

Study EN
**North Korea: Kim Jong-un’s Great Purge**

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 14-01-2014  
**Author**: Roberto BENDINI  
**Policy area**: Democracy | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: control of communications | concentration of powers | North Korea | South Korea | death penalty | militarism | isolationism | authoritarian regime | one-party system | economic reform | nuclear test | China  
**Summary**: While the news of the execution of Jang Song-taek, the second-most highly ranked leader in North Korea’s regime, surprised many outside the country, the event is unlikely to presage dramatic changes within the country. Jang Song-taek was sentenced to death on 12 December 2013 after being arrested during a public debate of the North Korean Politburo. His purge follows a major reshuffling of the army, the reorganisation of the ruling party and the execution of Kim Jong-un’s former fiancée and a group of popular artists. Jang Song-taek was known to be very close to Beijing and an advocate of economic reforms inspired by Chinese models. With Jang’s execution, Kim Jong-un has reasserted his leadership and sent a clear signal to his country’s closest – perhaps only – ally, China. It does not seem that the purge was intended to suppress internal opponents. The country is quiet, the armed forces have been weakened, and the execution of the only credible alternative to Kim Jong-un makes the perspective of a putsch extremely unlikely in the near future.

**The Impact of the 2014 ISAF Forces’ Withdrawal from Afghanistan on the Central Asian Region**

**Publication type**: Study  
**Date**: 14-01-2014  
**External author**: Jos BOONSTRA, Marliene LARUELLE, and Sébastien PEYROUSE (Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior - FRIDE, Spain)  
**Policy area**: Democracy | Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: Iran | Central Asia | border control | Pakistan | fight against crime | political situation | common foreign and security policy | China | Afghanistan | development policy | regional security | water resources | Russia | economic situation  
**Summary**: As the 2014 NATO drawdown from Afghanistan approaches, the international community increasingly looks towards the impact that a stable or unstable Afghanistan might have on the broader region, including Central Asia. Emphasis is often placed on the threat of radical Islamism and Afghan extremists that could destabilise Central Asia. More realistically though, the risk of spillover stems from a potential collapse of the Afghan security forces, refugee flows or instability in Tajikistan. However, the principal security threats to the Central Asian region stand largely separate from Afghanistan’s future. The main security challenges for the region lie in authoritarian governance, deeply-embedded state corruption, often connected to drug trade, and tensions over water and energy resources. This poses challenges to the European Union’s (EU) policies towards Central Asia. Increased attention and possibly a revision of EU policy to Central Asia are needed, in particular in the fields of the broader security dialogue; practical Security Sector Reform (SSR), including border control programmes; increased national-oriented attention to water-energy-related matters; support for democracy and human rights; and EU development aid.

**EU imports of goods from Chinese forced labour**

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 09-01-2014  
**Author**: Gisela GRIEGER  
**Policy area**: International Trade | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights  
**Keyword**: negotiation of an agreement (EU) | import (EU) | political prisoner | import restriction | slavery | trade relations | international labour law | prisoner work | China | prison system  
**Summary**: Goods made by forced labour in China, and a potential ban on their import to the EU, have long been on the EP agenda. Members have addressed numerous questions on the subject to the Commission and Council. Yet, so far EP calls for action have not led to tangible measures.

**Economic surveys and country surveillance**

**Publication type**: Study  
**Date**: 01-01-2014  
**Policy area**: Economics and Monetary Issues  
**Keyword**: labour market | France | United Kingdom | Austria | Finland | Estonia | Israel | Belgium | Chile | Italy | Baltic States | competition policy | monetary policy | China | Colombia | New Zealand | Hungary | Poland | South Korea | Germany | Portugal | economic growth | Norway | Turkey | Greece | Brazil | Switzerland | Denmark | United States | Czechia | Slovenia | India | Netherland | Japan | Indonesia | Iceland | Canada | Luxembourg | Ireland | Spain | economic forecasting | Mexico | Australia | economic convergence | Slovakia | Russia | South Africa | Sweden  
**Summary**: An Economic Survey is published every two years for each OECD member country and for some countries that are not OECD members, such as China, Russia and Brazil. There is also a separate Survey of the euro area. The Economic Surveys and the work of the Economic and Development Review Committee (EDRC) have evolved since the foundation of the OECD in 1961 when the Surveys focused on short-term macroeconomic developments. Now, the focus is mostly on policies having a potential to improve the economy’s long-run performance. This involves a wide range of policy areas including labour markets, competition, innovation, human capital, financial markets, sustainable development, social security, taxation, health care and public spending.
Irregular immigration in the EU: Some national perspectives on arrival of immigrants

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 13-12-2013
Author: Eva-Maria Alexandrova POPTCHEVA
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Spain | removal | Australia | cooperation policy | bilateral agreement | EU migration policy | admission of aliens | illegal migration | external border of the EU | Malta | Italy | Frontex
Summary: Recent events in the Mediterranean, which have led to many migrants dying off the shores of European Union Member States, have placed EU migration policies back on the political agenda. A particular difficulty in dealing with this phenomenon comes from the mixed flows of migrants, made up of both irregular immigrants and asylum seekers. The EU's legal framework for irregular immigration is scattered over a multitude of legal instruments. Those which apply at the arrival of migrants focus on border surveillance, return of irregular immigrants and cooperation on readmission with third countries of origin and transit, as well as on preventing the departure for Europe of irregular immigrants.

EU-China Investment Relations: Initial Appraisal of the Commission's Impact Assessment

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 09-12-2013
Author: Alina Alexandra GEORGESCU
Policy area: Ex-ante Impact Assessment | International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | impact study | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | investment abroad | investment promotion | China
Summary: This note seeks to provide an initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the European Commission's Impact Assessment Report on EU-China Investment Relations, submitted on 23 May 2013. It analyses whether the principal criteria laid down in the Commission's own Impact Assessment Guidelines, as well as additional factors identified by the Parliament in its Impact Assessment Handbook, appear to be met by the IA. It does not attempt to deal with the substance of the proposal.

Emergency response and civil protection

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 05-12-2013
Author: Cornelia KLUGMAN-VUTZ
Policy area: Environment | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Security and Defence
Keyword: civil defence | ECHO | first aid | the EU's international role | aid to disaster victims | operation of the Institutions | environmental risk prevention | EU financing | Philippines | natural disaster
Summary: The European Union's Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) and the European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) provide emergency relief after major disasters, such as typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. A new proposal would merge two existing provisions on EU crisis and disaster response as well as extending the scope of EU coordination in preparing for disasters and dealing with them.

China Pledges to 'Deepen' Reforms, Though Implementation Remains to Be Seen

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 25-11-2013
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: freedom of expression | death penalty | social rights | birth policy | ownership | social change | economic reform | China | liberalisation of the market | birth control | migration from the countryside to the town | intellectual property | mixed-ownership company
Summary: On 12 November 2013, the Central Committee of China's Communist Party adopted measures to 'deepen reform'. The reforms would support China's economic development. Legal reform will continue, but the Party's supremacy and application of law remain key issues. Re-education through labour is to be abandoned, China will gradually reduce the number of crimes subject to the death penalty. Public ownership will remain at the centre of the Chinese economic system. State-owned enterprises will lose some of their privileges. The private sector is encouraged to participate in state-owned projects. Couples in which one parent is an only child will be allowed to have two children. The strict control over urban residence rights, which deprives millions of migrant workers social and cultural benefits, is to be loosened. Accessing household registration rights in big cities will remain tightly restricted. The resolution specifies, 'It is to be permitted that rural collective and construction land use is sold, rented or leased'. The reform includes shaping 'an online public opinion structure that integrates positive guidance'. The resolution of the Party's Central Committee includes issues that China's authorities are often reluctant to address. The Party has re-affirmed its authority in all areas of reform. Most proposals represent a continuation of ongoing reforms. The measures' success will depend on their implementation.
Indonesia: An Emerging Economy in Need of Readjustment

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 25-11-2013
Author: Roberto BENDINI

Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | economic structure | trade restriction | Indonesia | trade relations | trade policy | protectionism | agreement (EU) | ASEAN | economic situation

Summary: Indonesia has experienced a sustained phase of strong economic growth. The scars caused by the 1997 financial crisis have healed, and the country has – at least so far – resisted the general economic slowdown that followed the 2008 crisis in many other international markets, including in South-East Asia. This country’s long-running growth is, however, threatened by a number of adverse economic factors, and a short-term economic slowdown cannot be excluded. Substantial reforms are required to ensure that Indonesia’s economic development is sustainable. Thanks in large part to its demographic might, Indonesia has become a full-fledged member of the G 20 Group. With more than 240 million inhabitants, the biggest country with a population of majority of Muslims in the world also plays a pivotal role within the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN).

Economic relations with the European Union (EU) are generally good. The EU and Indonesia signed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 2009. An ad-hoc EU-Indonesia ‘Vision Group’ produced a study in 2011 that called for the rapid initiation of talks on an enhanced Comprehensive Economic and Partnership Agreement, although negotiations have not officially been opened. On 30 September 2013, the EU and Indonesia signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement to prevent the trade of illegally logged wood.

In-Depth Analysis EN

Typhoon Haiyan Bares Shortcomings in Disaster Preparedness

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 20-11-2013
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA

Policy area: Environment | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: climate change | disaster area | civil defence | ECHO | natural hazard | aid to disaster victims | cyclone | emergency aid | Philippines

Summary: Tropical Typhoon Haiyan may serve as a stress case for the global disaster preparedness system. It will take years for the Philippines to recover. The EU should step up its efforts to build resilience and evaluate the ways in which it allocates funds in crisis-prone countries. Access to food and drinking water are the biggest problems. An estimated 56400 women are at risk of gender-related violence. The EU has made EUR 20 million available for humanitarian aid and recovery. Including EU Member States’ assistance, the EU contribution amounts to EUR 102.8 million. The Philippines is better prepared for natural disasters than many other developing countries. Typhoon Haiyan nevertheless laid bare the insufficiency of disaster management mechanisms. In the ten days following the cyclone, 20% of the assistance requested by the UN had been contributed. China’s initial reluctance to join international donors led to accusations that Beijing was influenced by its maritime dispute with the Philippines.

Briefing EN

Girls’ education in Pakistan - Malala Yousafzai

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 14-11-2013
Author: Cornelia KLUGMAN-VUTZ

Policy area: Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Pakistan | educational institution | honour | access to education | dropout | denominational education | right to education | position of women | education statistics | women's rights | religious fundamentalism | gender equality

Summary: The European Parliament's 2013 Sakharov Prize will be awarded to 16 year old education activist Malala Yousafzai from Pakistan. Pakistan is the country with the second highest number of children out of school, according to UNESCO. Two-thirds (over 3 million) of these are girls.

At a Glance EN
Comparing International Trade Policies: The EU, United States, EFTA and Japanese PTA Strategies

Publication type: Study
Date: 05-11-2013
External author: Kenneth HEYDON (International Trade Policy Unit, London School of Economics, the UK) and Stephen WOOLCOCK (International Trade Policy Unit, London School of Economics, the UK)
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: public contract | preferential agreement | United States | originating product | liberalisation of trade | tariff policy | Japan | trade relations | investment | international competition | technical barrier | EFTA countries | trade policy | EFTA | intellectual property
Summary: This paper assesses the substance of EU preferential trade agreements compared to those of the United States, EFTA and Japan. The topic is important because of the growth of PTAs but also because PTAs are destined to remain at centre stage. The debate on PTAs is not therefore about whether and how they might grow in importance but rather how they reflect trade policy preferences of the parties and how preferential and multilateral approaches will interact. While PTAs can promote liberalisation in particular sectors and help generate economic growth, preferential liberalisation will always be second best to multilateral liberalisation on an MFN basis because of the trade and investment diversion inherent in preferential deals. In this light, the paper proposes policy recommendations for the EU, covering, first, the broad objectives and desired outcomes of EU trade policy in general, second, the overall framework of EU PTA policy; and third, specific, sectoral, goals of EU PTA policy.

The United States-China relationship: Implications for the European Union

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 30-10-2013
Author: Carmen-Cristina CIRLG
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: economic independence | defence policy | United States | the EU's international role | Japan | territorial dispute | common foreign and security policy | foreign policy | economic relations | China | human rights
Summary: The rising economic, political and military influence of the People's Republic of China (PRC) at global level carries enormous geopolitical consequences for 21st century world politics. The United States (US), considered the dominant power in the international system, is still assessing to what extents China's rise constitutes an opportunity and a threat.

Proceedings of the Workshop on "The Long Road towards an EU-India Free Trade Agreement"

Publication type: Study
Date: 22-10-2013
External author: Arpita MUKHERJEE (Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations - ICRIER, India), Paul WYMENGA (ECORYS NEDERLAND BV, The Netherlands), Eline VAN DEN BOSSE (ECORYS NEDERLAND BV, The Netherlands), Tanu M GOYAL (ICRIER, India) and Ramneet GOSWAMI (ICRIER, India)
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | public contract | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | liberalisation of the market | free-trade agreement | India | protectionism | market access
Summary: Proceedings of the workshop on "The Long Road towards an EU-India Free Trade Agreement", held on 24 September 2013 in Brussels.

Reforms in Myanmar/Burma: two years on

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-10-2013
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: control of communications | military regime | peacekeeping | Burma/Myanmar | political prisoner | political situation | ethnic conflict | constitutional revision | expropriation | political rights
Summary: Since President Thein Sein took office in March 2011 his quasi-civilian government has pursued an ambitious reform agenda. Critics argue, however that despite the top-down reforms towards democracy, the military retains the power to block further liberalisation under the 2008 Constitution, and would have a vested interest in doing so, should its extensive involvement in key economic activities, such as jade, timber, oil and gas exploitation, and dam construction, be at risk.
The g7+ group of fragile states

Publication type Briefing
Date 10-10-2013
Author Giulio SABBATI
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword Democratic Republic of the Congo | Chad | trade balance | Liberia | Central African Republic | Papua New Guinea | South Sudan | Côte d'Ivoire | Somalia | Afghanistan | Burundi | Solomon Islands | development aid | Comoros | Togo | forced migration | gross domestic product | capital movement | Sierra Leone | East Timor | Haiti | Guinea | settlement of disputes | Guinea-Bissau

Summary The g7+ is an association of 18 fragile and conflict-affected states that have joined forces to share experiences and promote a new development framework based on five peace-building and state-building goals. The group brings together: Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Togo.

Briefing EN

The "New Deal" for engagement in fragile states

Publication type Briefing
Date 09-10-2013
Author Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword Democratic Republic of the Congo | developing countries | Liberia | Central African Republic | aid system | South Sudan | Côte d'Ivoire | Somalia | Afghanistan | development policy | international cooperation | Development Assistance Committee | development aid | Sierra Leone | East Timor | Haiti | settlement of disputes

Summary Despite steadily increasing inflows of official development assistance (ODA), fragile and conflict-affected states lag considerably behind other developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the 2015 target. Fragility and armed conflicts have seriously undermined their development. The "New Deal" framework has been specifically designed for and tailored to the development needs of fragile states. It challenges traditional donor-led development concepts, but has since been endorsed by more than 40 countries and international organisations, including the EU.

Briefing EN

EU-Taiwan trade relations

Publication type At a Glance
Date 03-10-2013
Author Marta LATEK
Policy area International Trade
Keyword technical barrier | liberalisation of trade | free-trade agreement | Taiwan | tariff barrier | market access | China | extra-EU trade

Summary Taiwan has a critical role in Asia's supply chains and its trade with China is expanding rapidly, enhancing the possibility of triangular trade with Europe. This makes the island an important, albeit diplomatically complicated, partner for the EU, with strong potential to develop bilateral trade.

At a Glance EN

EU-China bilateral investment agreement

Publication type At a Glance
Date 03-10-2013
Author Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | environmental standard | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | investment protection | trade agreement (EU) | market access | China | human rights

Summary In February 2012, the European Union and China agreed to start talks on a bilateral investment (BI) agreement. The Council is expected soon to approve the Commission's mandate for negotiations.

At a Glance EN
Taiwan - The Risk of Marginalisation: Economic Situation and Trade Relations with the EU

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 01-10-2013
Author: Marika ARMANOVIĆA
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | United States | free-trade agreement | Taiwan | trade agreement | China | World Trade Organisation | New Zealand | post-industrial economy | regional cooperation | Singapore | trade policy | economic situation

Summary: Taiwan, a member of the exclusive group of advanced Asian economies, increasingly faces the challenges typical of many post-industrial societies: growing inequality, an ageing population and competitive pressures from emerging economies. The island's diplomatic status created additional challenges for Taiwan's export-oriented economy. The explosion of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) as a result of the deadlock of the Doha Round of negotiations at the World Trade Organisation has left Taiwan virtually excluded from the PTA process. To prevent its trade partners from turning elsewhere, Taipei pursues an active and 'flexible' commercial diplomacy. The means participating in plurilateral initiatives (such as the Trade in Services Agreement within the World Trade Organisation), normalising relations with the People's Republic of China and working on bilateral agreements.

Taipei has recently concluded economic cooperation agreements with two countries with which the island does not have diplomatic relations: New Zealand and Singapore. These accords have offered Taiwan hope that it may also eventually join more ambitious trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership. While this sort of adherence is possible under the WTO framework Taipei will also have to make concessions and earn the acceptance of the other parties.

Analysis of EU-India trade

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 19-09-2013
Author: Giulio SABBATI
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: trade by country | trade statistics | foreign investment | import (EU) | export (EU) | India | foreign trade | goods and services | trade volume | corruption

Summary: Negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the EU and India – two of the world's four largest economies, with more than 1.7 billion people altogether – were launched in June 2007 and continue today. This paper aims to show levels of trade between the two. It looks at the trade in goods from both Indian and EU points of view, to measure the importance of EU trade for India and vice versa. It also looks at trade in services and foreign direct investment (FDI) in both directions. Indicators are presented to give an overview of the ease of trade and perceived corruption.

Lookout for Economic Developments and Risks in Selected Euro Area Member States

Publication type: Study
Date: 19-09-2013
Author: Stanislas DE FINANCE
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: Cyprus | United States | France | United Kingdom | economic statistics | Slovenia | economic development | participating country | Netherlands | Japan | Ireland | Italy | Spain | Germany | Portugal | Greece | economic indicator

Summary: Overview of the key indicators in selected Euro Area Member States. Latest economic and financial developments, upcoming events and developments and 2013 country specific recommendations are summarised for Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia. Euro area and US, the UK and Japan are compared for general economic indicators, public finances, private sector debt and inequalities, trade and competitiveness.

China-Iceland Free Trade Agreement

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 12-09-2013
Author: Laine SKOBA
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: extraction of oil | exploitation of resources | free-trade agreement | Iceland | Arctic | maritime shipping | market access | China

Summary: China signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with Iceland earlier this year. This is China's first FTA with a western European state. Once in force it will waive most tariffs in trade between the two countries. However, the tiny size of Iceland's market and the fact that the agreement does not provide low-tariff entry for China's products onto other European markets raises questions over China's motives. In particular, it is suggested that China is using this FTA to promote its strategic goals, such as obtaining better access to shipping routes through the Arctic or to natural resources extracted in the region.
Deepening EU-Malaysia relations
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 05-09-2013
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | public contract | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | Malaysia | free-trade agreement | vegetable oil | motor vehicle industry | market access | intellectual property
Summary: In 2010, the EU and Malaysia entered into parallel negotiations on a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with a view to considerably broadening the scope of existing ties between the two economies.

The EU's Contribution to Member States' Services Promoting Foreign Trade and Investment: Value Added?
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 03-09-2013
Author: Elfriede BIERBRAUER | Eulalia CLAROS GIMENO
Policy area: European Added Value | International Trade | Budgetary Control
Keyword: common commercial policy | India | Japan | investment abroad | audit | market access | small and medium-sized enterprises | China | direct investment | operation of the Institutions | diversification of exports | investment promotion | Thailand | chamber of commerce and industry
Summary: The European business centres in Asia – and notably those in India, China and Thailand, which are already active – have yet to demonstrate that they offer significant value-added for European enterprises wishing to engage in Asian markets. Instead of being welcomed as EU complementarities, they are generally considered as duplications of Member States' own promotion instruments, and this in a field in which the EU as such does not hold competence. It is questionable why the EU's efforts to facilitate market access for European enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, were not built on the best practises of existing institutions, notably the bilateral chambers of commerce. The timing is also questionable: additional structures were created long before any assessment was undertaken of what is already available in third markets. The lack of coherence of the different EU centres' work plans, priority clusters and time frames impede Member States - also members of the consortiums of various EU centres – from integrating the EU centres into their own marketing activities. It is therefore little surprise that an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of these EU business centres in Asia revealed numerous flaws – an assessment that suggests the EU's strategy should be overhauled. It remains uncertain, however, whether and how the modest performance of the centres in India, China and Thailand will influence European Commission's plans for additional Asian centres.

The East China Sea territorial dispute: Senkaku, Diaoyu, or Tiaoyutai Islands?
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 29-07-2013
Author: Cornelia KLUGMAN-VUTZ
Policy area: Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: UN convention | interpretation of the law | Pacific Ocean | law of the sea | Japan | Taiwan | territorial dispute | settlement of disputes | China
Summary: Japan, China, and Taiwan all lay claim to a group of barren islands and rocks in the East China Sea (ECS). They see strategic and economic advantages in claiming sovereignty over them. Chinese and Taiwanese trawlers and other boats regularly approach the islands, which are under Japan's control. Taiwan recently tried to alleviate tensions by proposing an "East China Sea Peace initiative".

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Integration, Internal Dynamics and External Relations
Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 23-07-2013
External author: Clara PORTELA (Singapore Management University, Singapore)
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: regional security | regional cooperation | political cooperation | Asia | multilateral relations | economic cooperation | ASEAN countries | institutional activity | ASEAN | human rights
Summary: Throughout its evolution, ASEAN has consistently maintained its attachment to the full respect of national sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, which translates into consensual decision-making, political rather than legally-binding agreements and the lack of sanctions for non-compliance. A major breakthrough in terms of institutionalisation came about with the signing of the ASEAN Charter of 2007, which has enhanced ASEAN's standing as a rule-based organisation and approximated it somewhat to structures typical of the EU. Unfortunately, the persistence of consensual decision-making and non-confrontational habits has slowed down some of ASEAN's integration projects and hindered the development of a human rights mechanism. Moreover the ASEAN integration project is imperilled by a number of structural factors, currently aggravated by the divisive influence of China in the economic and security field.
Assessing the Implementation of the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders - The Cases of Kyrgyzstan, Thailand and Tunisia

Publication type: Study
Date: 18-06-2013
External author: Karen BENNETT (Human Rights at the Human Rights and Social Justice Research Institute - HRSJ, London Metropolitan University, the UK)

Keyword: opposition | the EU's international role | operation of the Institutions | Thailand | Tunisia | human rights movement | Kyrgyzstan | Union delegation | human rights

Summary: With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the formation of the European Action Service, human rights defenders have received renewed attention in EU external relations. In June 2012 the EU launched its Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy including some benchmarked actions to take on behalf of HRDs and calling on EU Delegations and EU Member States missions to prepare human rights country strategies (HRCS) and to update the strategies annually. The 2008 revised European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (the Guidelines) provide a number of important recommendations for the EU and its Member State missions which have resulted in many good practice actions toward support and protection of HRDs. This study investigates the effective implementation of the Guidelines in Kyrgyzstan, Thailand and Tunisia, primarily from the viewpoints of diplomats and HRDs, with focus on the latter. Findings of this study suggest effective implementation of the Guidelines in Kyrgyzstan and Tunisia, but not in Thailand.

In-Depth Analysis EN

ASEAN Citizens’ Rights: Rule of Law, Judiciary and Law Enforcement

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 04-07-2013
External author: Jürgen RÜLAND (University of Freiburg, Germany)

Keyword: EU relations | public order | independence of the judiciary | social rights | democracy | ASEAN countries | rights of the individual | rule of law | political rights | corruption | ASEAN | human rights

Summary: With the ASEAN Charter of 2008, the Association of Southeast Asian Nation’s post Asian Financial Crisis reforms climaxed. The Charter added democracy, respect for human rights, rule of law and good governance to the sovereignty norms dominating the ASEAN Way, the grouping’s established repository of cooperation norms. The formation of a human rights body and the enactment of an ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) strengthened citizens’ rights in the region. However, critics deplore limitations of citizens’ rights due to a concept of context-based rights, limited mandates, legal ambiguities, the reforms’ non-binding nature and the lack of stakeholder participation in the reform process. At the national level, the implementation record of citizens’ rights is ambiguous. While on the one hand improvements of the rule of law and in the domains of good governance and law enforcement can be identified, there are, on the other hand, still major rhetoric-action gaps, often relegating citizens’ rights to a declaratory level.

In-Depth Analysis EN

China’s export restrictions on rare earth elements

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 18-07-2013
Author: Jacques LECARTE

Keyword: security of supply | metallic ore | export policy | shortage | environmental impact | export restriction | international commercial arbitration | China | ore deposit

Summary: Reserves of rare earth elements are unevenly distributed across the world. China has about 50% of known world reserves and until very recently was behind 95% of global supplies. It has reduced its export quotas drastically since 2010, arguing that the country had paid a heavy price for its mining activity in the form of resource depletion and severe environmental damage. In March 2012, together with Japan and the US, the EU demanded dispute settlement consultations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on China’s REE export restrictions.

Briefing EN

Le conflit du Cachemire: Après la reprise du dialogue indo-pakistanais

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 04-07-2013
Author: Marta LATEK

Policy area: Foreign Affairs

Summary: Héritage de la décolonisation, le différend opposant le Pakistan et l’Inde sur la question du Cachemire revient régulièrement dans l’attention de la communauté internationale. La recrudescence par intermittence des tensions à la frontière indo-pakistanaise, notamment en mai et juin 2013, attire l’attention sur cet antagonisme chronique qui oppose deux puissances nucléaires, dans une région instable.

Briefing FR
EU-Mauritania fisheries agreements

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 17-06-2013  
**Author** Ivana KATSAROVA  
**Policy area** Fisheries  
**Keyword** EU relations | Mauritania | conservation of fish stocks | fishing agreement | protocol to an agreement | common fisheries policy | China  
**Summary** The current EU-Mauritania FPA is the most important fisheries agreement both in terms of volume and financial contribution (€70 million per year). In July 2012, the Commission initialled a two-year protocol which is provisionally in force, pending the consent of the European Parliament on its ratification. In May 2013, the Fisheries Committee refused to give its approval to the conclusion of the protocol, forming the view that the agreement was not economically viable.

Proceedings of the Workshop on "Ubiquitous Digital Single Market"

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 14-06-2013  
**External author** Giovanni Sartor (European University Institute of Florence), Yong Woo Lee (University of Seoul), Koji Ouchi (Mission of Japan to the European Union), Catherine Dickson (Mission of Canada to the European Union), Silver Tammik (Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU), Nicola Westmore (G-Cloud), Sameer Verma (SAP), Jakob Kucharczyk (CCIA Europa) and Jörgen Gren (DG CONNECT, European Commission)  
**Policy area** Research Policy | Internal Market and Customs Union  
**Keyword** public-private partnership | South Korea | United Kingdom | Estonia | Netherlands | Japan | Canada | information storage | electronic government  
**Summary** The last decade marked a move from electronic, through mobile to ubiquitous services, defined as intelligent services providing users with real-time access to collaboratively generated information, everywhere, at any time and on any device. The workshop presents leading examples of ubiquitous government services applied in South Korea, Japan, Canada, Estonia, the UK and the Netherlands, as well as ubiquitous market services, with the objective of considering how Europeans could benefit from ubiquitous government and market solutions.

The Orientations and Policies of Interurban Transport in the Outermost Regions

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 14-06-2013  
**External author** Wolfgang Schade and Lucia Mejia-Dorantes (Fraunhofer Institute Systems and Innovation Research, Germany), Werner Rothengatter (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany), Olaf Meyer-Rühle, Markus Drewitz and Alex Auf der Maur (ProgTrans AG, Switzerland)  
**Policy area** Transport | Energy  
**Keyword** governance | French overseas department and region | sustainable mobility | peripheral region | urban transport | Saint Martin | EU financing arrangements | regional transport | Madeira | Azores | carriage of passengers | Canary Islands | common transport policy  
**Summary** A great diversity of spatial structures, transport systems and needs can be observed in the Outermost Regions (ORs) of the EU. Interurban transport as a means for developing the inland market of ORs would deserve more, and especially better-designed, support. Ideally, modern new regional transport authorities applying innovative solutions would avail themselves of better EU funding opportunities for both planning and operations.

International Migration Outlook

**Publication type** Study  
**Date** 13-06-2013  
**Policy area** Area of Freedom, Security and Justice  
**Keyword** migration | anti-discriminatory measure | integration of migrants | immigration | discrimination on the basis of nationality  
**Summary** This publication provides an analysis of recent developments in migration movements and policies in OECD countries and two analytical chapters, covering the fiscal impact of immigration in OECD countries and the discrimination against immigrants.
Salafist/Wahhabite Financial Support to Educational, Social and Religious Institutions

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 11-06-2013

External author: William RACIMORA (European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center - ESISC, Belgium)

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Qatar | Pakistan | Saudi Arabia | church-State relations | political situation | Indonesia | terrorism | Islam | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Tunisia | religious fundamentalism | Egypt

Summary: In recent years, the impact of funding educational, social and religious institutions by Salafi/Wahhabi networks in the Muslim world has become remarkable. This finding opens a political issue in an environment that is undergoing considerable social tensions and very rapid transformations. The main issue of this study concerns the purpose of these funds. Are they purely charitable or are they elements of a political control strategy? This study, devoted to the case of Egypt, Tunisia, Bosnia, Pakistan and Indonesia came to a common conclusion for these five countries. Financial aid granted by Salafi/Wahhabi, whether by institutional or private donators, systematically pursue a goal of political influence.

In-Depth Analysis EN

The Involvement of Salafism/Wahhabism in the Support and Supply of Arms to Rebel Groups around the World

Publication type: Study
Date: 11-06-2013

External author: Claude MONIQUET (European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center - ESISC, Belgium)

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: South-East Asia | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | financing | arms supply | Sahel | North Africa | Syria | terrorism | Islam | civil war | religious fundamentalism

Summary: The war in Afghanistan is undoubtedly a key moment in the emergence of an armed rebellion in the Muslim world. The impact of this conflict quickly exceeded the borders of Afghanistan to extend Pakistan. Since then, the Iraq war, the civil war that engulfed Syria and the armed conflict in the Sahel have helped to increase guerrillas in the Muslim world. This study aims to analyze the role of the Salafi/Wahhabi networks in financing and arming rebel groups.

Study EN

Proceedings of the Workshop on "Trade and Economic Relations with ASEAN"

Publication type: Study
Date: 07-06-2013

External author: Jacques PELKMANS (Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, Belgium), Federica MUSTILLI (Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, Belgium), Ludo CUYVERS (EIAS and CAS, University of Antwerp, Belgium), Lurong CHEN (UNU-CRIS, Bruges, Belgium), Lin GOETHALS (EIAS, Brussels, Belgium) and Stéphanie GHISLAIN (Polint, Brussels, Belgium)

Policy area: International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | EU relations | Malaysia | Singapore | trade relations | ASEAN countries | ASEAN | Vietnam | economic situation

Summary: Proceedings of the workshop on "Trade and Economic Relations with ASEAN", held on 28 February 2013 in Brussels.

Study EN

China's role in development in Africa: Challenging the EU approach

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-05-2013

Author: Gisela GRIEGER

Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: foreign aid | Africa | dissemination of information | development aid | trade cooperation | investment promotion | China

Summary: China's two-way "win-win" partnerships with African countries contrast sharply with the traditional asymmetric, one-way donor-recipient relationships between the EU and its African partners.

Briefing EN
China's role in UN peacekeeping operations

EN peacekeepers were participating in nine UN operations around the world. Officials have welcomed China's growing involvement. Since the early 1990s, China has become a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions. The EU, the US and UN international security | EU military mission | peacekeeping | multinational force | UNO | China

Global Governance | Foreign Affairs

Jacques LECARTE
22-04-2013

Briefing

China adopted stimulus measures to sustain its economy during the recession, but these also faced some setbacks. While inflation has been kept at bay, the risk of a real estate bubble and of a general overheating of the economy remains a matter of concern for the new government, in place only since March 2013. Despite some liberalisations, Beijing's command of many sectors of the economy remains strong, and access to its domestic markets not always easy for foreign operators.

The EU's trade and economic relations with China are generally good, and the number of disputes remains within reasonable ceilings. However, the EU is dissatisfied with China's reluctance to fully implement its WTO commitments and, more generally, with protectionist measures that affect EU interests. For its part, Beijing is still dissatisfied with the EU's refusal to grant the country 'market economy' status and has criticised the opening of a major anti-dumping and countervailing duty case on solar panels.

The study analyses the strengths and weaknesses of current EU engagement in fragile states, and in particular its support to conflict prevention and periods of transition, within the broader international context. It examines the limitations of the instruments and methods implemented by the EU to address the problems of fragile states and identifies what could be done to improve them.

Key weaknesses of the EU's programmes in fragile and conflict-affected states include insufficient analysis of the root causes of fragility, ineffective early warning systems, and insufficient coordination with other international actors engaged in fragile and conflict-affected states.

These challenges are not dissimilar to those experienced by other international actors. However, the EU's performance is exacerbated by a number of factors that are specific to its organisational and resourcing arrangements. These include the internal fragmentation of policy responsibility at headquarter level, inadequate translation of policy into programming at country level and insufficient instrumental coherence. Investing in expertise in fragility and conflict-prevention has not, to date, been a priority, particularly at the operational level.

The study's main recommendation is the finalisation of the Action Plan on security, fragility and development, to mutually reinforce the EU's objectives in development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and international security and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various institutions responsible for fragility and conflict at a policy and operational level. The study also recommends convening a high-level coordination group on fragility at headquarter level to agree policies and monitor progress and devolving decision-making on integrated programming and flexible resource utilisation in fragile and conflict-affected states to Heads of Delegation.

EN

In-Depth Analysis

Trade and Economic Relations with China - 2013

EN

China was able to resist to the global economic downturn in 2012, continuing its unprecedented growth at a pace only slightly lower than that registered in before the crisis.

China adopted stimulus measures to sustain its economy during the recession, but these also faced some setbacks. While inflation has been kept at bay, the risk of a real estate bubble and of a general overheating of the economy remains a matter of concern for the new government, in place only since March 2013. Despite some liberalisations, Beijing's command of many sectors of the economy remains strong, and access to its domestic markets not always easy for foreign operators.

The EU's trade and economic relations with China are generally good, and the number of disputes remains within reasonable ceilings. However, the EU is dissatisfied with China's reluctance to fully implement its WTO commitments and, more generally, with protectionist measures that affect EU interests. For its part, Beijing is still dissatisfied with the EU's refusal to grant the country 'market economy' status and has criticised the opening of a major anti-dumping and countervailing duty case on solar panels.

Negotiations for an EU-China partnership and cooperation agreement, initiated in 2007, have still not been concluded. In September 2012, China and the EU agreed to open negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement; these should begin in the coming months.

EN

In-Depth Analysis

China's role in UN peacekeeping operations

EN

Since the early 1990s, China has become a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions. The EU, the US and UN officials have welcomed China's growing involvement. As of 31 December 2012, a total of 1 869 Chinese peacekeepers were participating in nine UN operations around the world.
China's military rise
Publication type Briefing
Date 09-04-2013
Author Marta LATEK
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword navy | international security | military research | nuclear weapon | defence expenditure | military manoeuvres | China
Summary The Chinese military build-up is reflected in the steep growth in its military spending. This is rooted in a renewed foreign and security policy doctrine, manifested by a greater involvement and assertiveness of China on the international stage. The EU, increasingly aware of the necessity of a security dialogue with China, has to deal with the issue of arms embargo, viewed as a major obstacle on the road to deepening relations.

Electronic cigarettes
Publication type Briefing
Date 27-03-2013
Author Gregor ERBACH
Policy area Consumer Protection | Public Health
Keyword organic chemical | import (EU) | tobacco industry | product safety | consumer demand | smoking | market approval | health risk | China
Summary Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) work by vaporising nicotine liquid. They are aimed at people who do not want to smoke tobacco but cannot or do not want to overcome their nicotine addiction. They are mostly produced in China, and marketed in Europe by small and medium-sized firms. The market is growing rapidly.

The situation of women and gender-specific violence in India
Publication type Briefing
Date 07-03-2013
Author Cornelia KLUGMAN-VUTZ
Policy area Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword sexual discrimination | police | India | sexual violence | judicial inquiry | women's rights | gender equality | human rights
Summary India is a comparatively unsafe country for women. The gang rape and murder of a young woman in Delhi in December 2012 gave rise to mass protests and a worldwide debate about violence against women in India. Rapes, "femicide" and "dowry deaths" also raised questions about the general position of women in Indian society.

The Positions of Russia and China at the UN Security Council in the Light of Recent Crises
Publication type Study
Date 01-03-2013
External author Peter FERDINAND (University of Warwick, UK)
Policy area Democracy | Security and Defence
Keyword Iran | international security | peacekeeping | military intervention | UN Security Council | Syria | Russia | diplomatic relations | conflict prevention | China
Summary In 2011/12 China and Russia cast three vetoes in the Security Council against UN intervention in Syria to prevent government forces suppressing less well-armed oppositionists. This seemed to run counter to the willingness of these states to accept UN intervention in Libya at the beginning of 2011. How should this be explained? It also raised questions about the likely Russian and Chinese response to a possible worsening of the confrontation between the Security Council and Iran over its presumed nuclear programme. The answers derive from the posture of these two states towards the role of the UN in global governance generally, as well as their particular strategic concerns in the UNSC. There are apparent contradictions between the policies of the two states, as well as common threads. Russo-Chinese relations in the UNSC are also structured by the wider context of relations in the General Assembly, and by the efforts by both governments to promote a thickening as well as a harmonisation of foreign policies. But there are significant limitations on the likely extent of that harmonisation.
The Trans-Pacific Partnership and its Impact on EU Trade

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 25-02-2013
Author Roberto BENDINI
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | United States | Asia | free-trade area | trade dispute | ASEAN countries | economic integration | trade agreement
Summary The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is perhaps the most ambitious trade initiative — both in its scope and in the number of negotiating countries — to have been launched since the breakdown of the World Trade Organisation's Doha round of negotiations. The TPP, which has become US-led initiative since Washington formally joined the negotiating process in 2009, is widely perceived as a key component of the US’s recent ‘pivot’ towards Asia. The agreement’s provisions are designed to boost US trade policy by helping Washington increase exports to the Asia-Pacific region, and to do so on Washington's own terms. The TPP is also often viewed as a platform for achieving wider US foreign policy goals, and specifically countering the rising influence of China in the region. The potential economic gains for all participating countries are significant and projected to grow as the number of participants rises. Yet the obstacles to concluding the agreement are formidable and raise doubts about its feasibility. The uncertainty surrounding the TPP is further compounded by its closed-door negotiations, which leave many important questions unanswered. The impact of the TPP on the EU is likely to be negative, making the EU’s efforts to conclude free trade agreements with various Asian economies more urgent than ever.

ACP-EU Relations after 2020: Review of Options

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 22-02-2013
Author Manuel MANRIQUE GIL
Policy area International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword revision of an agreement | ACP countries | ACP-EU relationship | EDF | regionalisation | sustainable development | Cotonou Agreement | trade relations | least-developed country | ACP-EU institution
Summary Although it may seem that there is ample time to discuss the future of ACP–EU relations after the Cotonou Agreement expires in 2020, fundamental questions need to be answered by both partners before any decision is reached. Reflections should start with an assessment of the three pillars of the current partnership — development cooperation, trade relations and political dialogue — as well as the work of joint institutions. Looking ahead, three broad scenarios for post-2020 are envisaged in this paper: a dissolution of the joint partnership and its replacement with regional arrangements; the development of an overarching ACP–EU partnership that coexists with strengthened Regional Economic Communities (RECs); or the emergence of a more dynamic and cohesive ACP group, which may establish global partnerships beyond the EU. Each of these options will have very different implications and require a different response from the ACP and EU partners. Determining which outcome is most likely will be easier once the formal positions of the ACP and EU are defined and negotiations for the third revision of Cotonou (2015) get underway.

EU-ASEAN trade relations

Publication type Briefing
Date 20-02-2013
Author Giulio SABBATI
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword foreign investment | EU relations | economic statistics | NAFTA countries | trade relations | ASEAN countries | investment abroad | trading operation | services contract | corruption | China
Summary This paper aims to show levels of trade between the EU and the ASEAN countries – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma/Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It looks at their trade in both goods and services with the EU, China and the NAFTA countries (USA, Canada and Mexico), to measure the importance of EU trade for the ASEAN countries, and how important they are for the EU. It also looks at foreign direct investment (FDI) in the selected countries by EU entities, and by their firms in the EU.
The Impact of Biotechnology on Developing Countries

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis  
Date: 14-02-2013

External author: Timo KAPHENGST (Ecologic Institute, Germany) and Lucy SMITH (Ecologic Institute, Germany)

Policy area: Environment | Research Policy | Food Safety | Agriculture and Rural Development

Keyword: developing countries | seed | biotechnology | plant breeding | Argentina | China | nutritional needs | sustainable agriculture | economic consequence | biodiversity | Mexico | crop production | South Africa | cultivation techniques | environmental impact

Summary: Modified (GM) crops are increasingly grown in developing countries and can lead to socioeconomic benefits and costs depending on where and how they are adopted. After examining conventional assessments of farm-level indicators such as yield increase, pesticide costs, farmers' incomes from GM crops, the paper goes on to argue that a variety of structural issues at the national and international level have to be considered in order to obtain a comprehensive picture on the potential which GM crops have to enhance food security in developing countries. Hence, the paper further explores the relationship between GM crops and biodiversity against the backdrop of agro-ecology as a potentially beneficial concept for smallholders in developing countries.

A Human Rights and Poverty Review: EU Action in Addressing Caste-Based Discrimination

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis  
Date: 12-02-2013

External author: Suzanne Langsdorf (Ecologic Institute, Germany) and Rikke Nohrling (International Dalit Solidarity Network, Denmark)

Policy area: Social Policy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights

Keyword: poverty | Pakistan | social participation | Yemen | economic discrimination | EU action | social class | Asia | India | Bangladesh | human rights | equal treatment | financial aid | Nepal

Summary: Caste-based discrimination is a serious human rights violation, negatively affecting political, economic, social, cultural and civil rights of approximately 260 million people worldwide. The European Union is committed to the promotion of human rights within the EU and in its external relations. This brief aims to assess to what extent the EU has integrated the fight against caste-based discrimination in its external relations. Light is shed on the specific situations in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Yemen and the European Union’s actions to address caste-based discrimination in these countries. Based on the analysis, the briefing elaborates recommendations on how the EU can mainstream the fight against caste-based discrimination into policies, strategies and programmes as well as dialogues with caste-affected countries. Legal realities and options for addressing discrimination vary between the partner countries. In order to mainstream the fight against caste-based discrimination, the EU, and the EEAS in particular, should utilize all options with regard to that country, including association agreements as well as partnership and cooperation agreements. Regarding countries that will not receive bilateral aid, the focus should be put on dialogues to address caste-based discrimination. Lessons on mainstreaming can be gained from the European Union's experience in mainstreaming human rights.

Specific measures for agriculture in the EU's outermost regions

Publication type: At a Glance  
Date: 31-01-2013

Author: Ivana KATSAROVA

Policy area: Agriculture and Rural Development

Keyword: food production | French overseas department and region | regional aid | aid to agriculture | peripheral region | agricultural product | support policy

Summary: Development of the outermost regions is hindered by a number of geographical and economic factors. To offset these, the EU has introduced specific measures (POSEI) for the agricultural sector. The Commission proposes to revise the POSEI Regulation to align it with the requirements of the Lisbon Treaty and to update and simplify some provisions.

At a Glance: EN

Proceedings of the Workshop on "The EU - Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement: One Year After Its Entry Into Force"

Publication type: Study  
Date: 11-01-2013

External author: Stephen WOOLCOCK (London School of Economics, the UK) and Giulio SABATTI (European Parliament - for Part IV, Library Statistical Spotlight)

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs

Keyword: common commercial policy | foreign investment | South Korea | liberalisation of the market | free-trade agreement | bilateral agreement | non-tariff barrier | trade agreement (EU) | tariff reduction | harmonisation of standards

Summary: Proceedings of the workshop on "The EU - Republic of Korea free trade agreement: One year after its entry into force", held on 16 October 2012, in Brussels.

Study: EN
Social welfare protection: the EU, USA and China

Since the 1980s largely ageing populations in developed countries have meant pressure for real budget increases for healthcare and pensions. This pressure remains present in the austerity-hit EU, where social welfare protection already accounts for a large part of Member State (MS) governments' costs. The US, with the world's largest economy, has its own distinct welfare system. China has recently started to focus on welfare with significant budgetary increases, albeit from a relatively low base.

The 2012 South Korean Presidential Election

The two main candidates hailed from the two dominant political parties. 'Economic democratisation' and North Korea policy emerged as key issues. To what extent will Park curb the power of chaebols remains unclear. North Korea will present both a challenge and an opportunity to Park's presidency. Reconciliation, cooperation and peace in Northeast Asia are among Park's top priorities. Balancing between the US and China might pose a particular challenge. Voting patterns suggest that South Korea's familiar policies might be shaken up in the future.

Reproaches Follow North Korea's 'Successful' Launch of a Dysfunctional Satellite

The launch followed an unsuccessful attempt to propel the same sort of satellite into orbit in April. Many foreign governments consider the exercise a test of the country's ability to launch long-range missiles. The country has gradually increased the range of its missiles. The UN has called on North Korea to suspend its ballistic missile system. North Korea's technology is mostly borrowed and largely outdated. The satellite launched into orbit appears to outside observers not to be functional... at least for now. Pyongyang may have felt political and social pressures - in addition to military ones - to launch the rocket. The UN Security Council and various countries condemned the move. Even China expressed 'regret'. This does not mean, however, that Pyongyang will be harshly punished by Beijing, its principal ally and trading partner. But the deeper worry abroad may be the possibility of a burgeoning Asian arms race.

After a Landslide Victory, Japan's LDP Returns to Power

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is returning to power after three years. The results signal a sharp rejection of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which has governed only since 2009. These were the first general elections held since Japan's 2011 'triple disaster'. After 54 years of almost unbroken rule, Japan's LDP government was ousted in 2009. Successive DPJ governments were unable to keep their campaign promises. Frequently shifting governments have not overcome Japan's prolonged political and economic problems. Although 12 parties campaigned, the real competition was between the LDP, the DPJ and the JRP, with a few additional parties playing a minor role. Small parties could play a role in the coalition government. The stagnant economy, nuclear power and regional relations were the most pressing campaign issues. How to boost the economic growth while controlling the public debt and maintaining public support will be a challenge for any government. Giving up nuclear energy will be costly for Japanese national economy, although this is the preference of most Japanese citizens. Territorial disputes must be treated gently so as not to disrupt Japan's international trade. Reviving the economy will be Shinzo Abe's priority. International relations are likely to shift, with Abe seeking to avoid antagonising China. Relations with other Asian nations are also likely to develop.
Recent EU-China trade frictions

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-12-2012
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | anti-dumping duty | trade restriction | trade dispute | solar collector | trade relations | China
Summary: This year, frictions between China and the EU on trade have come to a head. Growing Chinese export volumes to the EU have been affected by EU trade-defence instruments (TDIs), while China's announcements of retaliatory measures have increasingly been followed by formal WTO complaints against the EU.

At a Glance

The Impact of the Resolutions and Other Activities of the European Parliament in the Field of Human Rights Outside the EU

Publication type: Study
Date: 05-12-2012
Author: Manuel MANRIQUE GIL
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Human Rights
Summary: The European Parliament is seen as the most principled and outspoken EU institution within the field of human rights. However, empirical research focused on Belarus, China, Cuba, Egypt, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe suggests that translating this visibility into tangible results — protecting individuals and organisations and influencing third countries' policies violating human rights — remains an elusive goal. Many factors that determine the impact of the Parliament in the field of human rights are external to the Parliament and beyond its control. Others, however, stem from a lack of coordination between the Parliament and the European External Action Service. Within the Parliament, factors that can influence the organisation's impact include the level of coherence, consistency and coordination of activities. To strengthen its effectiveness, the European Parliament should make the following adaptations: strengthen contacts with civil society in third countries to reinforce the institution's position as a supporter of human rights; increase its internal coherence and coordination across different instruments; and exploit the powers granted by the Lisbon Treaty to promote an effective and common EU human rights strategy.

Study

China's New Leadership

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 04-12-2012
Author: Xavier NUTTIN | Yan LUO
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: political reform | political situation | sustainable development | foreign policy | China | Communist Party
Summary: China has made considerable efforts to lift people out of poverty. Unbalanced and unsustainable development, social problems and corruption remain, however, serious challenges. The two main fractions, 'Tuanpai' and the 'Shanghai group', are jostling for key positions. The new Communist Party Secretary-General, and future President, Mr. XI Jinping, is a princeling whose political beliefs remain largely unknown. The second-in-line and future Prime Minister, Mr. LI Keqiang, is from the Tuanpai faction. Three leading contenders, all reformers, did not make the cut. The balance of power between conservatives and reformers remains unclear. The new leaders will have to carry out economic and social reforms. The once-in-a-decade leadership reshuffle is unlikely to open the door for political reforms. Beijing's increasingly assertive foreign and security policy will continue. Major personnel changes will take place again in 2007.

Briefing

Escalating EU-China trade row over solar panels

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 15-11-2012
Author: Gisela GRIEGER
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: photovoltaic cell | import (EU) | solar energy | anti-dumping measure | international competition | tariff barrier | international commercial arbitration | China
Summary: On 5 November 2012, China filed a WTO complaint against the EU, alleging that certain feed-in tariff programmes adopted to promote solar power generation are inconsistent with WTO rules. The EU lodged a similar WTO complaint against Canada which has been partly upheld according to a leaked interim report.

At a Glance
EU-US cooperation in the Asia-Pacific

Publication type Briefing
Date 13-11-2012
Author Carmen-Cristina CIRLIG
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword climate change | United States | Pacific Ocean | multilateral relations | APEC countries | democracy | ASEAN countries | common foreign and security policy | ASEAN | China
Summary The economic and political "rise of Asia" has led to increasing talk of a "Pacific century". The US "pivot to Asia-Pacific" announced in 2011 entails a series of diplomatic, economic and military initiatives, as well as efforts to engage the EU in cooperating in the region. However, the EU and its Member States still appear to lack a common vision for the Asia-Pacific.

Free-Trade Agreement between the European Union and Japan: Initial Appraisal of the European Commission's Impact Assessment

Publication type Briefing
Date 09-11-2012
Author Alina Alexandra GEORGESCU
Policy area Ex-ante Impact Assessment | International Trade
Keyword World Trade Organisation | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | free-trade agreement | Japan | non-tariff barrier | tariff reduction | market access
Summary Initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the European Commission's Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal for a recommendation for the Council to open negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and Japan.

Improving EU-Asia trade relations

Publication type Briefing
Date 07-11-2012
Author Francesco PONTIROLI GOBBI
Policy area International Trade
Keyword common commercial policy | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | trade restriction | free-trade agreement | Asia | protectionism | ASEAN
Summary The EU's Global Europe Communication from 2006 was a first step in a new trade policy envisaging ambitious and far-reaching bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with priority partners having significant market potential. Asia will soon become the largest economic region in the world. A "new generation" free trade agreement has already been concluded with South Korea. Agreements with India, Singapore and Malaysia could be signed before the end of 2012, while negotiations and talks with several other Asian states continue.

Public Procurement in International Trade

Publication type Study
Date 25-10-2012
External author Stephen WOOLCOCK (International Trade Policy Unit, London School of Economics, the UK)
Policy area International Trade | Internal Market and Customs Union
Keyword common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | public contract | third country | United States | free-trade agreement | India | social clause | trade agreement (EU) | international competition | market access | China
Summary Ensuring that public procurement markets are transparent and open to international competition is one of the most challenging aspects of trade policy. Countries may have statutory or de jure preferences for national companies or more likely, purchasing entities exercise de facto discrimination in favour of local suppliers. The Single Market Programme has resulted in public procurement in the EU become relatively transparent and thanks to liberal investment policies foreign suppliers can freely established in the EU to serve procurement markets. The EU has also made commitments under the Government Purchasing Agreement (GPA) that are more or less in line with the coverage of the EU Directives. As a consequence it has sought to persuade other WTO members to make equivalent commitments, but with only partial success. Some progress has been made at the plurilateral level in the shape of greater coverage by existing signatories to the GPA. The EU has also managed to negotiate the inclusion of public procurement in recent free trade agreements (FTAs), but access to major emerging markets such as India, China and Brazil remains an issue. After a good deal of debate the Commission has proposed the draft Regulation with the aim of harmonising the treatment of third country suppliers by EU purchasing entities and enhancing the EU's leverage in negotiations. The Regulation will serve the purpose of enhancing EU leverage, but experience with previous efforts to open markets suggests that genuine competitive procurement markets requires 'buy in' on the part of key economic and political interests in the country concerned. It is not clear that this is the case in the emerging markets or developing countries. Although there are difficulties measuring how open markets, are issues of reciprocity for the EU arise in selected sectors rather than the EU procurement market being generally more open than other major markets. In terms of the Regulation the best outcome for the EU wo

Study EN
EU trade negotiations with Japan
Publication type At a Glance
Date 17-10-2012
Author Francesco PONTIROLI GOBBI
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword public contract | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | free-trade agreement | Japan | non-tariff barrier | trade agreement (EU) | market access
Summary A "scoping exercise" by the European Commission and Japanese government on a possible free trade agreement was concluded on 31 May 2012. The Commission subsequently recommended to the Council that it authorise the opening of negotiations.

Enhancing EU action on the death penalty in Asia
Publication type Study
Date 17-10-2012
External author Roger HOOD, Professor Emeritus of Criminology, University of Oxford and Emeritus Fellow All Souls College Oxford, UNITED KINGDOM
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword South-East Asia | project evaluation | death penalty | alternative sentence | EU financing | prison system | human rights
Summary This paper has three objectives. First, it provides an analysis of the state-of-play regarding the death penalty in Asia, covering 24 countries of which 5 have abolished the death penalty, 6 are abolitionist in practice and 13 have carried out executions within the past 10 years without declaring a moratorium. Developments and recommendations for EU action relating to eight countries are highlighted: China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. The analysis reveals the wide range of crimes still threatened by the death penalty, the death row problem in countries that are abolitionist in practice or rarely carry out executions, the continued existence of the mandatory death penalty, yet the falling rate of executions in retentionist countries. Second it reports on EU human rights dialogues; on other interventions including the protection of citizens facing the death penalty; the part played by the EU in promoting resolutions for a moratorium on executions at the UN General Assembly; and the success of projects in the Philippines and China supported by EU grants. Third, it suggests policies that might help to support initiatives in Asian countries aimed both at restraining the use of the death penalty and securing its complete abolition.

Publication type Study
Date 11-10-2012
External author Jürgen MATTHES (Cologne Institute for Economic Research - IW Köln, Germany) and Yorizumi WATANABE (Keio University, Tokyo, Japan)
Policy area International Trade | Transport | Foreign Affairs
Keyword common commercial policy | public contract | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | free-trade agreement | railway industry | Japan | motor vehicle industry | economic relations
Summary Proceedings of the Workshop on "Towards a Free Trade Agreement with Japan ?" held on 19 September 2012 in Brussels.

EU-Asia trade relations beyond China
Publication type Briefing
Date 09-10-2012
Author Giulio SABBATI
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword trade by group of countries | South-East Asia | foreign investment | South Korea | EU relations | tertiary sector | economic statistics | India | Japan | trade relations | investment abroad | trading operation
Summary While the focus is often on China, the EU is also deepening trade relations with other Asian countries. This paper aims to show levels of trade between the EU and nine Asian countries – India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. Taking EU, US and China in comparison, it looks at trade in both goods and services, to measure the importance of EU trade for those countries, and how important they are for the EU.
EU-South Korea: analysis of trade
Publication type Briefing
Date 09-10-2012
Author Giulio SABBATI
Policy area International Trade
Keyword South Korea | EU relations | large business | tertiary sector | economic statistics | trade relations | trading operation | services contract
Summary The EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has been in force since 1 July 2011. One year on, it is timely to look at trade between the EU – the world’s largest economy in terms of GDP – and South Korea – the world’s 13th largest economy. This spotlight shows trade in goods between the EU and South Korea. It also looks at trade in services, which is much smaller. Finally, the data are tied into real enterprises, in terms of the largest Korean and EU companies.

Escalating Tensions between Japan and China in East Asia's Maritime Areas
Publication type Briefing
Date 01-10-2012
Author Sandro D'ANGELO
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword Japan | territorial dispute | settlement of disputes | China
Summary A longstanding territorial dispute between China and Japan — and Taiwan as well — has recently reignited, bringing with it old nationalist animosities. The dispute focuses on a group of uninhabited islands near the coast of Taiwan—called 'Senkaku' by the Japanese and 'Diaoyu' by the Chinese. On 10 September, the Japanese government announced it had reached a deal with the owner of three of the islands to buy them for 2.05 billion yen (around EUR 20 million). The decision, which is expected to be finalised in the following weeks, has resuscitated tensions with China and Taiwan, both of which claim sovereignty over the islands.

EU-Malaysia Economic and Trade Relations
Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 26-09-2012
Author Marika ARMANOVICA
Policy area International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs
Keyword commodities market | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | foreign investment | redistribution of income | export policy | Malaysia | trade relations
Summary Malaysia's economy is one of the most open in the world. An export-oriented strategy helped the country to transform itself from a developing economy into a newly industrialised, middle income economy in only a few decades. Today Malaysia's goal is to become a high income country by 2020. Malaysia's economic base is varied, and trade is dominated by electronics and intermediate goods. However, the economy remains somewhat cushioned by the commodities sector, and its competitiveness relies largely on low cost labour. These dependencies must decrease if the country is to achieve its objective of becoming a high income country. Improving education and administration, creating modern and better jobs, and liberalising the service sector therefore figure high on the government's agenda.
For the European Union, Malaysia is the second trading partner in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), after Singapore. EU-Malaysian trade is focused on machinery and transport equipment, but opportunities are growing for the service sector. The two partners are currently negotiating a bilateral free trade agreement, although a region-to-region accord remains the ultimate goal for the EU.

Development of the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism
Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 25-09-2012
External author Vitit MUNTARBHORN (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand)
Policy area Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword EU aid | EU relations | integration of migrants | ASEAN countries | women's rights | international court | children's rights | ASEAN | human rights | legal cooperation
Summary The study examines developments concerning human rights mechanism(s) in the Southeast Asian region, in the space known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), with a view to strengthening relations between the European Union and the region. The ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) has now been set up as the overarching body to promote and protect human rights in the ASEAN. Two sectoral bodies working on human rights have also appeared: the ASEAN Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW).
The study thus makes a number of recommendations to European institutions to help strengthen the mechanisms mentioned, while building also other checks and balances, including national human rights institutions. The door is open to a regional Declaration and or treaty on human rights, and a regional court. Various recommendations are also targeted to the European Parliament, including to help support parliamentarians in the ASEAN region to integrate human rights into their work.
Human Rights in North Korea

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 17-09-2012
Author: Anete BANDONE
Policy area: Human Rights
Keyword: torture | North Korea | freedom of expression | pluralism in the media | freedom of assembly | cruel and degrading treatment | food shortage | rule of law | prison system | human rights
Summary: The human rights record in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea) has been widely condemned by the international community, including by the EU and the European Parliament. The ascension of the latest ruler of the Kim dynasty, Kim Jong-un, in December 2011 has not brought tangible change. Since the country is practically closed to foreigners, the human rights situation can only be evaluated based on the testimonies of refugees and defectors. Their reports consistently reveal blatant and unrepentant violations of human rights, which aim to elicit the total submission of the country's citizens to the regime and its ideology. While the majority of North Koreans suffer from permanent hunger, those who try to leave the country face harsh punishment upon repatriation. Citizens suspected of being disloyal to the regime and their families are placed, without trial, in prison camps with abhorrent conditions. North Korea is among the countries carrying out the highest numbers of executions in the world.

Application of the System of Derogation to the Rules of Origin of Fisheries Products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji

Publication type: Study
Date: 14-09-2012
External author: Blomeyer & Sanz, Centre of Marine Sciences, University of Algarve, University of Vigo and University of Wageningen
Policy area: Environment | Economics and Monetary Issues | Fisheries
Keyword: social impact | Papua New Guinea | conservation of resources | fishing industry | Fiji | designation of origin | agreement (EU) | environmental impact | economic situation
Summary: This study aims to provide an independent assessment of the impact of the derogation to the standard Rules of Origin under the 2009 interim Economic Partnership Agreement (iEPA) between the EU and Papua New Guinea. Overall, the study findings validate, albeit to a limited extent, the iEPA's negative economic impact on the EU tuna processing industry (trade, production, added value, employment). The iEPA's economic and social impact on Papua New Guinea is largely considered positive (growing tuna processing and related employment opportunities). Finally, substantial concerns exist with regard to the environmental issues at stake (health of tuna stocks).

EU-Vietnam Economic and Trade Relations

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 07-09-2012
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: economic forecasting | common commercial policy | foreign investment | free-trade agreement | economic relations | Vietnam | economic situation
Summary: Vietnam has been applauded as a development success story. Reforms launched in 1986 have transformed the country from one of the world's poorest into a lower middle income country, open to trade and investment. Despite the country's success, Vietnam is still a mixture of a state-controlled and market-driven economy. For the past five years, growth has slowed, and the country has faced severe macroeconomic problems. Aware of persistent inefficiencies, the Vietnamese authorities have committed to a series of economic reforms. The negotiations on a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU launched in 2012 will take Vietnam's development level into account. In order for the EU to reap a significant benefit, the Union's ultimate goal remains the conclusion of a larger, region-to-region FTA with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).
Old Games, New Players: Russia, China and the Struggle for Mastery in Central Asia

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 03-08-2012
Author: Roberto BENDINI
External author: Marco ROSSI (AANZ Unit) under supervision of Roberto BENDINI (Policy Department, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, European Parliament)

Policy area: International Trade | Energy | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: energy supply | Central Asia | international security | United States | the EU's international role | gas pipeline | terrorism | Russia | oil pipeline | China

Summary: Since 9/11 and the 2003 NATO-led invasion of Afghanistan, Central Asia has emerged from the shadows as an area of strategic interest. While different actors — including the US and the EU — have operated in the region during recent years, Russia and China remain the principal contenders for Central Asia's leading role. Russia draws on historical and linguistic ties with the post-Soviet republics, as well as on a substantial military presence on the ground. China, on the other hand, is relentlessly exploiting its economic pre-eminence and flexible bilateral diplomacy as it accesses Central Asian energy resources and markets. Yet China is also keen to avoid regional instabilities that might spillover into its Western provinces — a balancing act that has so far proved successful, although the situation is still evolving. As the EU's influence in Central Asia remains marginal and the US interests are centred on Afghanistan, the rivalry between Russia and China may develop further. With NATO troops scheduled to withdraw from Afghanistan in 2014, the moves of the two powers after that point will determine the outcome of the Central Asian 'great game'.

Proceedings of the Workshop on "The EU and China: Strategic Partners or Global Rivals?"

Publication type: Study
Date: 03-08-2012
External author: Hongyi LAI (School of Contemporary Chinese Studies, University of Nottingham, the UK), Valérie NIQUET (Fondation pour la Recherche Strategique, Paris, France) and Jonas PARELLO-PLESNER (European Council on Foreign Relations, London, the UK)
Report writing by TEPSA
Introduction by Xavier Nuttin (Policy Department, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, European Parliament)

Policy area: International Trade | Contract Law, Commercial Law and Company Law | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | EU relations | political situation | sustainable development | trade relations | market access | China

Summary: At the request of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs which is preparing an own-initiative report on "EU-China Relations", the Policy department of DG External Policies has organised a workshop on "The EU and China: strategic partners or global rivals?". The workshop goal was to analyse, in the context of growing interdependence between the two sides, the impact of China's policies on bilateral relations and on EU interests. Its main objective is to provide a clearer picture of the current state of play of China-EU relations and of their future.

Proceedings of the Workshop on "Trade and Investment for Development"

Publication type: Study
Date: 29-06-2012
External author: Kenneth HEYDON (London School of Economics, UNITED KINGDOM), Robert WADE (London School of Economics, UNITED KINGDOM), Stephen KARINGI (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ETHIOPIA), Malcolm SPENCE (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ETHIOPIA), Patrick MESSERLIN (IEP & GEM de SciencesPo, Paris, FRANCE) and Sanoussi BILAL (European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maastricht, NETHERLANDS)

Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | preferential agreement | development aid | trade relations | innovation | international trade | international competition | China

Summary: Presentations of the workshop on "Trade and Investment for Development" held on 29 March 2012 in Brussels.
Trade and Economic Relations with Japan: Assessing the Hurdles to the FTA

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 26-06-2012
Author: Marika ARMANOVICA
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: public investment | trade balance | earthquake | free-trade agreement | Japan | tariff negotiations | economic situation

Summary
Japan's recent economic performance is generally described as unattractive, particularly when compared to its growth twenty years ago. Yet perhaps the glass is half-full rather than half-empty: the Japanese economy still ranks third in the world after the US and China, living standards are high, and the country has recovered well from the 2011 earthquake, given the scale of the disaster. Yet Japan faces tremendous challenges, including economic stagnation, a high fiscal deficit and an ageing population. The 2011 catastrophe undermined the revitalisation programme that had been launched, although it also created a sense of urgency to move forward with reforms. Opening the country to competition from the outside is integral to its rebirth strategy, and the free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU would contribute to that opening. Though consultations on the ambition of the accord have been finalised, its success is uncertain. A number of stakeholders in the EU are sceptical of the benefits and of Japan's readiness to implement commitments, especially on non-tariff barriers. Yet others believe that if Europe postpones the process at a moment when it faces economic slowdown, the delay will send a negative signal to a country that is an important trade partner and investor.

Proceedings of the Workshop on "Transatlantic Economic Relations"

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2012
External author: HAMILTON Daniel (Center for Transatlantic Relations, Johns Hopkins University, USA), MEUNIER Sophie (Princeton University, USA), PLUMMER Michael G. (Johns Hopkins University, SAIS, Italy), HERITIER Adrienne with KARAGIANNIS Yannis (European University Institute, Italy), MATTLI Walter (Oxford University, UK), JONES Erik (Bologna Institute for Policy Research, UK), DOVER Robert (Dover and Jones Ltd, UK)
Policy area: International Trade | Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: labour market | United States | foreign investment | economic growth | liberalisation of the market | economic cooperation | trade relations | investment abroad | settlement of disputes | China

Summary
Proceedings of the Workshop on "Transatlantic Economic Relations", held on 30 May 2012 in Brussels.

The Role of China in World Fisheries

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2012
External author: Roland BLOMEYER, Antonio SANZ and Kim STOBBERUP (Blomeyer & Sanz S.L), Ian GOULDING (Megapesca Ltda), Daniel PAULY (Sea Around Us Project, Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia)
Policy area: Food Safety | Fisheries
Keyword: food safety | fishing fleet | resources of the sea | catch of fish | fishing agreement | fishery management | common fisheries policy | China

Summary
This document aims to provide a broad perspective of China's fishing and related activities, and to support a better understanding of the role of China in world fisheries. The scope of the study is focused on China's marine capture fisheries, and covers the following subjects: the scale of Chinese catches, the state of the Chinese fleet, the role of China as an import/export country of fish products, the activities of Chinese fishing vessels on the high seas and in third country waters, and China and IUU fishing.
Trade and Economic Relations with China - 2012

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 12-06-2012
Author: Roberto BENDINI | Matthew KILROY
Policy area: International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: international investment | World Trade Organisation | surveillance concerning imports | import (EU) | trade dispute | trade agreement | China
Summary: 2012 will be a politically interesting but difficult year for China. The 18th National Congress of the China's Communist Party, due to take place in the autumn, is unlikely to dramatically modify the economic and trade strategy that Beijing has followed so far. However, the Chinese policy-makers will have to make long-lasting decisions this year — including how to deal with the global financial turmoil that has gripped its most important trading partners, the United States and the European Union — in order to ensure that the country remains stable.

Chinese trade and economic policy will thus be determined by both internal and external factors. External factors include the problem of sovereign debts in the Euro area. This has already severely impacted Chinese export performance, as demand for Chinese goods has fallen to levels rarely seen in the past two decades. To offset this threat to its industry, China must seriously reconsider the structure of its economy and its status as an exporting country. The country's economic growth strategy will have to be adapted to boost domestic consumption.

A sustained internal market will therefore be essential to maintain China's GDP growth at healthy levels and avoid a potentially disruptive slowdown of the national economy. Major issues that will need to be addressed include:
- imbalances between the rural areas and the industrial coastal areas,
- a real estate market that needs to be kept under close scrutiny,
- a potentially fragile banking system and
- unsustainably high levels of investment.

The EU's trade and economic relations with China are generally good. Negotiations for a bilateral investment treaty are underway, and Beijing has softened certain access barriers to its market. However, the EU is still dissatisfied with China's reluctance to fully implement its World Trade Organisation (WTO) commitments and to proceed with a new trade agreement that would replace the 1985 partnership and cooperation agreement.
CSDP Missions and Operations: Lessons Learned Processes

Summary
The first Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission was launched in 2003. Since then the EU has launched 24 civilian missions and military operations. Despite the tendency of military operations to attract more attention, the majority of CSDP interventions have been civilian missions. Since the beginning the actors involved in CSDP recognised the need to learn from the different aspects of missions and operations. The tools and methodologies to guarantee a successful learning process have evolved over time together with the evolution of CSDP. This study represents a first stock-taking exercise of the lessons learned processes at the EU level. The study is divided in three major components. The first component looks at the available literature on the subject of knowledge management with regard to CSDP missions and operations. The study then draws upon short case-studies from the 21 missions and operations to-date with a specific focus on the lessons identified and (possibly) learned in practice. The study concludes with a number of recommendations targeted at how the lessons learning processes could be improved including specific recommendations on the role of the European Parliament.

Study EN

Gendercide: The Missing Women?

Summary
Some countries have for many years witnessed distorted sex ratios in the sense that the share of male population is larger than one would expect based on “natural” gender ratios at birth and mortality rates. This imbalance is often the result of son preference, rooted in cultural and economic experiences, and accentuated by declining fertility and pressures to have smaller families. With a focus on China and India, where skewed sex ratios have been highlighted by the international community and recognised by their governments, this study reviews the key literature exploring the causes, current trends and consequences of sex selective practices from infanticide and neglect to more modern sex determining and selective practices such as ultrasound tests and consequent sex selective abortions. Despite legislation regulating sex selection in both China and India, these practices are difficult to monitor, with medical practitioners and equipment suppliers reaping profits from the procedures. Skewed ratios have also been observed in other countries, such as Vietnam, Albania, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Normalisation of sex ratios cannot be achieved by simply controlling the use of sex selective technologies. A sustainable way to reduce sex selection requires strategies which focus on countering the gender inequality that drives son preference. An issue already addressed by the European Assembly, the European Parliament has a role to play in highlighting the issue through its relevant committees, such as Committee of Development, Human Rights, International Trade and Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, as well as through their country-specific delegations, as well as in the upcoming Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

Study EN, FR

Renewable energy investment: The BRICs and the EU

Summary
Renewable energy is a growth industry with a number of years of significant investment in new electricity generating capacity. The EU has placed focus and investment in increasing its renewable energy capacity in recent years, mainly in wind and solar power.
Proceedings of the Workshop on "What Perspectives for Stability and Democracy in Pakistan?"

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 12-12-2011

External author: Ayesha SIDDIQI (political commentator, Islamabad, PAKISTAN); Amir E. KHAN (Democracy Reporting International - DRI, PAKISTAN) and Gareth PRICE (Asia Programme, Chatham House, London, UNITED KINGDOM)
Ralph PIOTROWSKI (project coordinator, Ecologic Institute, Berlin, GERMANY)

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Pakistan | EU relations | Kashmir question | separation of powers | India | democracy | religious fundamentalism | socioeconomic conditions | regional integration

Summary: The Policy Department of the European Parliament has organised On behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for Relations with South Asia a workshop on "Perspectives of stability and democracy in Pakistan". Three speakers were invited to address issues covering domestic socio-political aspects, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, regional relations and the potential contribution and support to stability, democracy and socio-economic development. Pakistan continues to be a fledgling democracy in transition. The complexities of the Pakistani situation make it difficult for outsiders to understand the different powers at play in the country and to deal with fears about instability. A partnership of the military with the judiciary and the media has emerged, and the military retains its capacity to influence the public discourse and the trust in the effectiveness of a democratic polity in general. The definitive substantial challenge is to cope with continuing tensions between civilian and military rule. Positive developments include the 18th and 19th Amendments to the Constitution (which re-establish parliamentary democracy, including aspects of electoral reform), the provinces agreeing on the National Finance Commission Award, the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the recent resumption of talks between India and Pakistan. The development of trust between Pakistan and India will be essential for the longer-term entrenchment of civilian government in Pakistan; this in turn will require some agreement to be forged over Kashmir. Whether this is feasible will depend on political will. The EU should consolidate long-term support for strengthening democracy in Pakistan by the formulation of a strong electoral framework, strengthening of the Pakistani Parliament as an institution and supporting local self governance and devolution of power.

Access to Energy in Developing Countries

Publication type: Study
Date: 07-11-2011

External author: Arno BEHRENS, CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLICY STUDIES (CEPS), Belgium; Jorge NUNEZ FERRER, CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLICY STUDIES (CEPS), Belgium; Mathilde CARRARO, CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLICY STUDIES (CEPS), Belgium; Glada LAHN, CHATHAM HOUSE, UK; Eike DREBLOW, ECOLOGIC INSTITUTE, Germany

Policy area: Energy | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: energy grid | electricity supply | developing countries | energy distribution | India | development aid | renewable energy | living conditions | Mali | environmental cooperation | Bangladesh

Summary: Despite the continuous efforts of developing countries and the international community to reduce energy poverty, some 2.7 billion people around the world still rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating and 1.3 billion people do not have access to electricity. Over 80% of the energy poor live in rural areas and roughly two thirds in sub-Saharan Africa and India – the focus regions for this study. While fossil fuels will inevitably play a major role in expanding on-grid energy supply, this study shows that renewable energy sources – and especially small decentralised solutions – have huge potential for providing reliable, sustainable and affordable energy services for the poor, particularly in rural areas of developing countries. Many challenges remain, including financing, capacity building, technology transfer and governance reforms. A careful assessment of the environmental impacts of renewable energy technologies, particularly those on water, is an important prerequisite for donor finance. With the right design, energy access projects can also bring a host of developmental co-benefits. It should be possible for international initiatives including the UN’s Year of Sustainable Energy for All and the EU’s partnership with Africa to build on the rich experience and lessons learned from pilot projects over the last two decades in order to optimise donor effectiveness in this area.
EU-China Trade Relations

Publication type: Study
Date: 14-07-2011

External author: Denise PREVOST, Leïla CHOUKROUNE and Rogier CREEMERS (Maastricht University Law Faculty, the Netherlands)

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs

Keyword: World Trade Organisation | technology transfer | foreign investment | trade restriction | trade relations | investment | economic relations | market access | China

Summary: This study analyses China's role for China's "going-global" strategy: they have strengthened China's economic relationships with several developing countries especially in Africa, ensured China of significant access to natural resources, and enhanced China’s sphere of influence. At the same time, Chinese export credits have become a competitive threat to exporters from the OECD. China is not a member of the OECD and is therefore not obliged to comply with the OECD guidelines that limit tied aid; regulate credit practices; impose maximum repayment terms, country risk classification and minimum interest rates; require the exchange of information; and impose social, environmental and governance standards on financing activities. This creates an unfair advantage for Chinese exporters. Chinese export credit financing can also have important implications for China's partner countries. In particular, it can lead to new debt sustainability issues, slower reform processes in countries with weak governance systems, drain local natural resources without contributing enough to development, and it can also become a threat for local products and workers.

Study DE, EN, FR, IT

EU-Taiwan FTA hinges on green light from China

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 23-09-2011

Author: Francesco PONTIROLI GOBBI

Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs

Keyword: liberalisation of trade | free-trade agreement | Taiwan | diplomatic relations | anti-trust legislation | extra-EU trade

Summary: The European Union is Taiwan’s fifth trade partner, even though it has no formal diplomatic relations with Taipei. Taiwan is currently the EU’s 14th trade partner. Trade between the EU and Taiwan has increased more than eightfold over recent decades, but there are no concrete plans to deepen trade relations.

At a Glance

Export Finance Activities by the Chinese Government

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 23-09-2011

External author: Isabella MASSA (Overseas Development Institute - ODI, United Kingdom)

Policy area: International Trade | Financial and Banking Issues

Keyword: environmental standard | OECD | restrictive trade practice | foreign investment | OECD countries | export aid | export credit | trade relations | international competition | China

Summary: This note analyses the functioning of Chinese export finance activities and their potential implications for OECD members and China’s partner developing countries. From our analysis, it emerges that over the past decades, China’s policy banks (China Eximbank, Sinosure, China Development Bank, and China Agricultural Development Bank) have provided an increasing amount of export credit financing which may take several different forms including preferential export buyers’ credits, export sellers’ credits, mixed credits, natural resource-backed loans or lines of credit, concessional loans, and export special economic zones. Chinese export finance activities have played an important role for China’s “going-global” strategy: they have strengthened China’s economic relationships with several developing countries especially in Africa, ensured China of significant access to natural resources, and enhanced China’s sphere of influence. At the same time, Chinese export credits have become a competitive threat to exporters from the OECD. China is not a member of the OECD and is therefore not obliged to comply with the OECD guidelines that limit tied aid; regulate credit practices; impose maximum repayment terms, country risk classification and minimum interest rates; require the exchange of information; and impose social, environmental and governance standards on financing activities. This creates an unfair advantage for Chinese exporters. Chinese export credit financing can also have important implications for China’s partner countries. In particular, it can lead to new debt sustainability issues, slower reform processes in countries with weak governance systems, drain local natural resources without contributing enough to development, and it can also become a threat for local products and workers.

In-Depth Analysis
Passenger Name Records Agreement: EU agreements with the US and other third countries

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 01-07-2011
Author: Graham STULL
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: transport user | United States | Australia | terrorism | exchange of information | Canada | personal data | air transport | data protection | agreement (EU)
Summary: After the first PNR agreements concluded after 9/11 proved controversial and encountered legal difficulties, the Commission is now negotiating long-term PNR agreements with three key third countries: the US, Canada and Australia.

At a Glance EN

Asian Organized Crime in the European Union

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 15-06-2011
External author: Dina Siegel-Rozenblit (Utrecht University, the Netherlands)
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: organised crime | money laundering | Europol | counterfeiting | EU police cooperation | fight against crime | judicial cooperation in criminal matters in the EU | Asia | trafficking in human beings | drug traffic
Summary: The note shows that Asian organized crime, which is a relatively new phenomenon, has entered the criminal area in a number of EU countries. It analyses how the activities of Asian criminal groups are linked to migrant communities and which fields are concerned. They include extortion, human smuggling/trafficking and money laundering. In collaboration with other non-Asian criminal groups, Asian organized crime is also active in the production and trade of illegal drugs, matchfixing and counterfeiting of consumer goods. This note proposes appropriate solutions on how to fight this particular form of organized crime.

In-Depth Analysis DE, EN, FR
Executive summary BG, ES, CS, DA, ET, EL, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SL, FI, SV

Impact of sanctions and isolation measures with North Korea, Burma/Myanmar, Iran and Zimbabwe as case studies

Publication type: Study
Date: 31-05-2011
External author: PORTELA Clara Dr, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Singapore Management University, Visiting Fellow - Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, BELGIUM
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: Iran | North Korea | the EU's international role | Burma/Myanmar | international sanctions | Zimbabwe | case study | globalisation
Summary: The present study explores how the introduction of targeted sanctions has transformed the practice of international organisations, looking at the examples of North Korea, Burma/Myanmar, Iran and Zimbabwe. Although the ultimate effectiveness of the individual sanctions measures can hardly be ascertained, not least due to their co-existence with unilateral sanctions proactively enforced by the US, the analysis demonstrates that the character of sanctions measures, and the changing nature of the international system, has put the use of sanctions and isolation measures in different terms than was the case just a couple of decades ago. While it is beyond the scope of this study to reframe the scholarly and policy controversies on the use of sanctions, it is postulated that such debate should shift from the "whether" sanctions should be used to the "how" sanctions should be employed, and that the quality of the public debate would benefit from enhanced public awareness of the EU's policies in this regard. Finally, the study concludes that despite the absence of formal decision making powers over EU sanctions policies, the European Parliament can play a decisive role in their formulation building up on its proactive record in the scrutiny of EU foreign policy. It should enhance its contribution by requesting from the Council to report regularly on the design of sanctions, their use in negotiations with the target, their role in supporting reformists within the elites and the position of democratic forces, their conformity with human rights and their ultimate political efficacy.

Study EN

EU-India: removing trade hurdles

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 06-05-2011
Author: Francesco PONTIROLI GOBBI
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: poverty | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | liberalisation of trade | free-trade agreement | India | sustainable development | investment | extra-EU trade
Summary: The EU is India's major trading partner, while India is the EU's eighth most important. Negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) were launched in June 2007 as part of the Global Europe Strategy, which outlined the need for comprehensive FTAs with Asian countries. India and the European Union are expected to sign the agreement by the end of 2011.

At a Glance EN
Food aid to North Korea

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 05-05-2011  
Author: Marta LATEK  
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: humanitarian aid | military regime | North Korea | food aid | nuclear non-proliferation | aid evaluation | natural disaster | human rights  
Summary: The chronic crisis which has affected one of the most isolated and authoritarian countries in the world for at least two decades poses a dilemma to the international community. The renewed famine facing the Korean population is largely “state-caused”, even if recent climatic problems have worsened the situation.

EU-Japan trade relations

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 03-05-2011  
Author: Kalin IVANOV  
Policy area: International Trade  
Keyword: World Trade Organisation | public contract | earthquake | free-trade agreement | Japan | non-tariff barrier | trade relations | market access | extra-EU trade  
Summary: Japan and the EU figure among each other's top trading partners, with Japan as the leading exporter of cars to the EU. However, the two have not always managed to tap the potential for bilateral trade, or translate common concerns into an effective partnership. EU exporters and investors remain frustrated by Japan’s structurally closed markets.

Cybersecurity and Cyberpower: Concepts, Conditions and Capabilities for Cooperation for Action within the EU

Publication type: Study  
Date: 15-04-2011  
External author: KLIMBURG, Alexander (Austrian Institute for International Affairs - OIIP, Austria) and TIRMAA-KLAAR, Heli (Estonian Foreign Policy Institute, Estonia)  
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Public international law | Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence  
Keyword: computer crime | Internet | United States | European security | EU Member State | multilateral relations | terrorism | Russia | NATO | common foreign and security policy | international law | China  
Summary: The study analyses policy options for strengthening cybersecurity within the EU and examining potential points-of-entry, including within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The study provides an overview of the principle concepts and definitions of cyber security and cyber war, drawing attention to the complexity and cross-jurisdictional nature of the field. In addition to examining current cyber threats to the EU, the study also analyses the capacity of the EU to address more sophisticated cyber-attacks within a common framework. In this respect the study offers important insights into the political, operational and structural challenges that need to be addressed in order to protect the EU and its citizens as well and to exercise "cyberpower" on the international stage. The study takes-stock of the existing NATO and EU capabilities related to cyber security and highlights the added value of the EU in applying a diverse range of policies that can help enable it to comprehensively tackle the increasing range of cyber threats. The study has been requested to introduce Members of the European Parliament's Sub-Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE) to the current issues in cyber security and cyber warfare, as well as to provide a selection of policy recommendations, including within the CSDP context. The study also provides innovative conceptual understanding on what might constitute EU "cyberpower".

Raw materials

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 30-03-2011  
Author: Graham STULL  
Policy area: Environment | International Trade | Industry  
Keyword: security of supply | commodities market | import (EU) | import substitution | waste recycling | raw material | export restriction | international commercial arbitration | China | Latin America  
Summary: As global demand for resources continues to grow, the EU, as an importer of raw materials, needs a coherent strategy to ensure reliable access at fair market prices. Just as important are strategies to improve resource efficiency within Europe.
The threat of 'currency wars': global imbalances and their effect on currencies

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-11-2010

External author: Anne SIBERT (Birbeck, University of London and CEPR), Zsolt DARVAS (Bruegel), Jean PISANI-FERRY (Bruegel), Charles WYPLOSZ (Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva), Stefan COLLIGNON (S. Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa) and Guillermo de la DEHESA (Centre for Economic Policy Research - CEPR)

Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: United States | economic recovery | balance of payments | inflation | exchange rate | euro | euro area | China | foreign exchange market | monetary policy
Summary: Within the context of persisting international imbalances and a lingering crisis, there has been increased focus on the exchange rates between major economic areas, taking for example the heated debate between the US and China and unilateral action by numerous countries. It currently seems that a quantitative easing boom is back on the agenda globally. Inevitably, such policy actions will have effects on the global flows of capital and trade and have already attracted strong criticism from some emerging countries such as Brazil which complain about the loss of competitiveness caused by the appreciation of their currency. The Monetary Experts Panel of ECON was asked help the European Parliament's ECON Committee understand the implications of the above mentioned developments. Consequently, in this compilation, the motives and policy options available to major economic actors with regard to their exchange rate and current accounts are raised, i.e. how the euro area can avoid remaining too passive and being the loser in these policy actions of global importance.

Study EN

Application of Certain Guidelines in the Field of Officially Supported Export Credits

Publication type: Study
Date: 03-11-2010

External author: TE VELDE, Dirk Willem (Investment and Growth Programmes, Overseas Development Institute, UK)

Policy area: Environment | International Trade | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: environmental standard | OECD | export aid | export credit | economic recession | credit policy | international competition | China | extra-EU trade
Summary: The purpose of this workshop was to provide information on the current position with regards to the provision of export credit within the European Union and other countries and thus assist the INTA Committee in its deliberations on the proposal from the Commission for the (renewed) transposition of the OECD Recommendations, Principles and Guidelines on Officially supported Export Credits into EU law.

Study EN

The EU Banana Regime: Evolution and Implications of its Recent Changes

Publication type: Study
Date: 14-10-2010

External author: CALÌ Massimiliano (Overseas Development Institute, United Kingdom); ABBOTT Roderick (LSE/ECIPE, United Kingdom) and PAGE Sheila (Overseas Development Institute, United Kingdom)

Policy area: International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development | Industry
Keyword: preferential agreement | ACP countries | import (EU) | tropical fruit | tariff reduction | trade agreement
Summary: The study first surveys the key issues resulting from the long banana dispute at the WTO. It distinguishes 3 phases in the attempt by the EC to design an EU-wide and WTO-compatible banana import regime: the first (1993-1999) in which the first regime applicable to all EU member countries was introduced and challenged in WTO, and the first modifications made with changes to the methods for delivery of import licenses; the second phase (1999-2005) when the future regime was negotiated and the transition to a 'tariff only' regime began: the last phase (2006-to date) with the signing of the EPAs and the 'Geneva agreement' of 2009. The second part of the study looks at the possible implications of these recent changes, suggesting that their net effects are expected to be positive for ACP countries, slightly negative for Latin American countries, and indifferent for EU producers, which are unaffected due to the decoupled payment system now used for most production. The recent EU bilateral agreements with some Latin American banana producers further erode the preferential access of ACP producers and of other Latin American exporters to the EU, which are all expected to experience a limited decline in their relative competitiveness in the EU market. The main adjustment costs are likely to be borne by the Caribbean exporters, which will need to receive the majority of the support envisaged by the EU through the bananas accompanying measures to help banana exporters to adapt to the changes in the EU's import regime. These resources should be allocated across countries according to the expected losses in terms of banana exports and production, taking into account the lessons from previous similar schemes, including the SFA, STABEX, the support for sugar producers and the EU Rum Programme.

Study EN
An assessment of the EU-Korea free trade agreement

Publication type Study
Date 14-07-2010

External author LSE Enterprise Limited on behalf of the London School of Economics and Political Science and Consortium Partners

Policy area Environment | Intellectual Property Law | International Trade
Keyword customs tariff | social impact | World Trade Organisation | South Korea | free-trade agreement | sustainable development | trade agreement (EU) | environmental impact | intellectual property

Summary The free trade agreement negotiated between the EU and the Republic of Korea (EU-Korea FTA or the Agreement) is far-reaching. In terms of the scope of tariff liberalisation it goes beyond anything the EU has agreed in previous agreements. The coverage of services is also ambitious. In a range of other measures, such as the treatment of technical barriers to trade, protection of intellectual property rights including geographic indicators, as well as provisions on dispute settlement and sustainable development the Agreement breaks new ground. It therefore represents forward movement on trade at a time when multilateral negotiations in the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) continue to stagnate and international trade needs of promoting in the wake of the financial crises induced slow down.

Study EN

A snapshot of the banana trade: Who gets what?

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 30-06-2010

External author Dr. Pedro Morazán, Institut SÜDWIND, Germany

Policy area International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword trade statistics | preferential agreement | ACP countries | import (EU) | tropical fruit | tariff reduction | trade agreement

Summary With the “Agreement of Geneva” the dispute about the banana imports over 15 years seems to come to an end. The liberalisation caused by this agreement will have a substantial impact on the international banana market. In order to estimate the possible effects and measures to be implemented in the future it is necessary to know the current situation of the banana trade, the factors determining trade policies, the main stakeholders and nodes in the value chain for bananas as well as their impact on labour conditions and livelihoods in exporting countries.

In-Depth Analysis EN

A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE AND PUBLIC-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR URBAN WATER SERVICES IN ACP COUNTRIES

Publication type Study
Date 27-05-2010

External author Josephine TUCKER, Research Officer, Overseas Development Institute, UK ; Roger CALOW, Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute, UK ; Darla NICKEL, Ecologic Institute, Austria ; Thomas THALER, Researcher, Ecologic Institute, Austria

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword public-private partnership | ACP countries | water management | water supply | South Africa | urban area | Ghana

Summary This study evaluates the comparative advantages of PPPs and PuPs in urban water services. Based on literature analysis and case studies, past performance of PPPs and PuPs is reviewed against several criteria. Lessons are then identified regarding the barriers and enablers which determine the success of partnerships, and the kind of support donors could usefully provide. The study concludes that while the main determinant of performance is not public or private management but policy, institutions, finance and regulation, there are notable differences between what PPPs and PuPs can offer. In the right circumstances the private sector can improve in efficiency and management, but at high costs. PuPs generally have lower costs and greater focus on capacity building and equity, and have the potential to support more holistic approaches to urban services and the water cycle. Partnerships with local actors can also improve services by allowing more flexible approaches to service provision to meet the needs of different households. A key conclusion is that governments should have a choice of different partnership options and the ability to end failing partnerships.

Study EN

Reform of the European Investment Bank: How to Upgrade the EIB’s Role in Development

Publication type Study
Date 27-05-2010

External author Prof. Stephany GRIFFITH-JONES, Columbia University ; Judith TYSON, UK

Policy area Budget | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword EIB loan | investment policy | ACP countries | developing countries | operation of the Institutions | economic recession | financial aid | European Investment Bank | small and medium-sized enterprises

Summary In this briefing paper we evaluate the performance of the EIB in its external lending and policies in relation to developing economies including its response to the financial crisis. We recommend policy changes including greater absolute levels of lending to developing economies and greater risk taking to achieve “more with less”. We also recommend tailoring the mandate and lending criteria for developing countries including greater flexibility of lending criteria and standards, a crisis mandate, country level priority objectives linked to MDGs and greater blending of grants and lending. In order to support such changes the need for greater and specialist resources including staff and capital is discussed including the possibility of extending cooperation with other IFIs and the MTR feasibility study for a dedicated subsidiary.

Study EN, FR
Tools for Fishing Fleet Management

Publication type Study
Date 15-03-2010
External author Luc van Hoof
Policy area Fisheries
Keyword New Zealand | United States | comparative analysis | fishing fleet | Australia | Norway | fishing statistics | Iceland | fishery management | Canada | common fisheries policy | fishing regulations
Summary This briefing document focuses on the basic principals of fleet capacity and capacity management and examines how fleet capacity is managed in a number of non-EU countries; Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States of America, Norway and Iceland. It aims at providing a support tool for the Members of the EP's Committee on Fisheries providing knowledge on instruments for fishing fleet management as used in different non-EU countries in comparison with the EU fishing fleet management scheme.
Study ES, DE, EN, FR, IT

Environmental challenges facing China

Publication type Briefing
Date 12-03-2010
Author Cornelia KLUGMAN-VUTZ
Policy area Environment | Foreign Affairs
Keyword desertification | management of resources | water pollution | pollution control | soil pollution | waste management | acid rain | China | drought
Summary China is facing a plethora of environmental challenges, most a result of rapid economic development, which is linked to heavy industrialisation. These challenges include air pollution, contamination and scarcity of water, desertification, and acid rain. The public lacks information on environmental hazards or contentious projects. Recognising many of these problems, Beijing has taken various measures since the mid-2000s, for instance on energy efficiency, renewable energy, pollution and water scarcity. However, many laws are not enforced at local and regional levels.
Briefing EN

The Potential for Cultural Exchanges between the European Union and Third Countries - the Case of China

Publication type Study
Date 15-04-2009
External author Alain Modot, Héloïse Fontanel, Silvia Angrisani, Pierre Jalladeau, Abel Ségré tin, Bérénice Angremy, Li Hua, Bi Dongna (Media Consulting Group - Paris, Brussels and Beijing)
Policy area Culture
Keyword control of communications | promotion of the European idea | culture industry | mass media | cultural heritage | telecommunications | cultural cooperation | communications industry | China
Summary This study provides an overview of the cultural sector in China, going on to describe the current state of cultural exchanges between the EU and its Member States and China. It concludes by providing ideas for policymakers on how such exchanges can be strengthened. China is taken here as a test case for the EU's cultural policy towards third countries in general.
Study EN
Executive summary BG, ES, CS, DA, DE, ET, EL, FR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, FI, SV

The Status and Location of the Military Installations of the Member States of the European Union and their Potential Role for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 19-02-2009
External author James Rogers (University of Cambridge, UK) and Luis Simón (University of London, UK)
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword United Kingdom OCT | French overseas department and region | European security | France | United Kingdom | military base | common security and defence policy
Summary Executive summary
The recently launched European Union (E.U.) mission EUNAVFOR SOMALIA (‘Operation Atalanta’) to fight piracy off the Somali coast and ensure the protection of a key E.U. Sea Line of Communication (S.L.o.C.) is a vivid example of the coming of age of European Security and Defence Policy (E.S.D.P.).1 While such a development should be applauded, the present Briefing Paper argues that the E.U. and its Member States need speed up their efforts to reform, amalgamate and put in place the necessary functional and geographic structures for the protection of European S.L.o.C.s. and to expand the E.U.’s geographical and geostrategic reach.
Key to these structures are the overseas military installations of the E.U. Member States. These facilities, spread out across the world—and concentrated in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans—form part of a far broader set of geographic, political, economic and strategic dynamics, namely the delivery of a credible E.U. ‘forward presence’ (i.e. regional presence, overseas basing, expeditionary military capabilities, and logistical supply systems, etc.) in regions surrounding the E.U., or along critical S.L.o.C.s linking the E.U. homeland to the multiple different nodes and points of the global economy. In an increasingly multipolar world, placing a renewed focus on these military facilities is a pressing European priority, particularly in an age of increasing geopolitical competition along the coastal littoral of Eurasia.
In-Depth Analysis EN
The EU-LAC-ASIA triangulation strategy - a new boost for European-Latin American relations?

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 29-04-2008
External author: Dr Klaus BODEMER
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: EU relations | Latin American organisation | regional cooperation | political cooperation | Asia | economic relations | international relations | Latin America

Summary: The political dialogue started almost two and a half decades ago with the so-called ‘San José Process’ is without doubt one of the soundest bases of Euro-Latin American relations. At the beginning of this century, during an internal debate on stronger biregional relations and in response to general and structural changes in the international environment, the idea arose to extend this bi-regional dialogue towards a trilateral or triangular dialogue which included Asia as the third player on the stage. The text presented below questions whether this strategy could be a significant step towards renewed dialogue and a strategic partnership between the two regions. The starting point (first part) is an evaluation of the most important dialogues in Euro-Latin American relations: the dialogue between the EU and the Central American Isthmus (the San José Process), the meetings between the EU and the Rio Group and, finally, the Euro-Latin American Summits. The points of reference of this evaluation are the three different functions which a political dialogue, from a conceptual point of view, must accomplish: agenda setting, rationalisation and institutionalisation. The fact that these functions are only partially fulfilled in bi-regional relations between the EU and LAC is at least partly due to the origin of the dialogue and its politico-institutional logic, both of which limit the room for manoeuvre for renewed dialogue. Some proposals in this respect are followed in the second part of the Briefing Paper by a description and evaluation of the triangular strategy between the EU, Latin America and Asia. Obviously a strategy of this profile, started in recent years by Spanish diplomats and academics, has to take account of changes in the regional and international environment. A triangular approach which goes beyond a collection of ideas and assumptions and meets the necessary requirements for its political implementation, requires greater efforts in empirical research.

The Impact of Exchange-Rate Fluctuations on Trade Policy

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 29-04-2008
External author: Michel Dupuy
Professor of Economics
Researcher at the Laboratory for Analysis and Research in Economics – International Economics and Finance (LARE-efi)
Policy area: International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: deflation | United States | Japan | exchange rate | trade relations | monetary policy | China | single exchange-rate policy | inflation | euro | trade policy | European Central Bank | foreign exchange market

Climate Change Impacts and Responses in Bangladesh

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 24-01-2008
External author: Saleemul Huq and Jessica Ayers
International Institute for Environment and Development 3 Endsleigh Street WC1H 0DD London United Kingdom
Policy area: Environment | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: climate change | the EU's international role | multilateral aid | Bangladesh | natural disaster

Climate Change and India: Impacts, Policy Responses and a Framework for EU-India Cooperation

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 24-01-2008
External author: Dr Ritu KUMAR
TERI-Europe 27 Albert Grove London SW20 8PZ United kingdom
Policy area: Environment | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: climate change | greenhouse gas | India | environmental cooperation
Missile Defence and European Security

Publication type: Study
Date: 12-11-2007
External author: Stephen Pullinger, Giovanni Gasparini, Götz Neuneck and Xavier Pasco,

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: Iran | European security | United States | Czechia | France | United Kingdom | anti-missile defence | common security and defence policy | China | Poland | North Korea | Germany | non-proliferation of arms | Russia | NATO

Summary: The United States Government plans to deploy 10 interceptors in Poland and a radar installation in the Czech Republic. This has caused a stir in political and military circles in both Europe and Russia. This study examines the US proposals and their possible implications for Europe. It makes an assessment of the degree to which defences might enhance European security and sets out the parameters of a European approach towards missile defence. The first section of the study evaluates the nature, extent and quality of threats from ballistic missiles to EU territory - especially in relation to their deployment with WMD warheads. The second section maps the nature, extent and quality of existing missile defence capabilities. It provides an assessment of the state of US missile defence plans and programmes, examines the reasons behind the US requirement for a missile defence site in Europe, and also considers NATO’s activities in missile defence. The third section provides observations on the wider strategic implications of the US proposed deployments in Eastern Europe, including its impact on strategic stability, relations with Russia and with NATO, tackling rogue states, moving into space, industrial policy and on arms control. The fourth section provides a brief glimpse of the national positions of some of the key European countries involved in this debate – Poland, Czech Republic, France, Germany and the UK. This fifth section explores: the differences in perception and approach between the US Administration and the Europeans; the particular role that missile defence might play within overall European counter-proliferation strategy; and assesses some of the outstanding issues that need to be addressed as part of a balanced European approach. The study concludes that there is no logical, military or moral reason why Europe should accept vulnerability against ballistic missile attack, if and when that vulnerability becomes apparent and where it is possible to

The human rights dialogue between the EU and China

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 12-10-2007
External author: Mario Esteban
Centre d'études d'Asie de l'Est
Université autonome de Madrid

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: torture | control of communications | EU relations | death penalty | independence of the judiciary | repression | political rights | China | Olympic games | human rights


Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 08-10-2007
External author: Claudia Charles

Policy area: Human Rights
Keyword: third country | torture | Morocco | cruel and degrading treatment | agreement (EU) | admission of aliens | human rights | removal | Russia | return migration | Sri Lanka | foreign national | illegal migration

China’s energy policy in the light of climate change, and options for cooperation with the EU

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 08-10-2007
External author: Mr. Jonathan Holslag
Bondgenotenlaan3400 LANDEN

Policy area: Environment | Energy
Keyword: clean technology | EU relations | natural gas | energy policy | sustainable development | soft energy | China
China and climate change: Impacts and policy responses

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 08-10-2007
External author: Prof. Robert ASH SOAS, University of London
Policy area: Environment | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: climate change | environmental protection | economic development | reduction of gas emissions | environmental impact | China

How Effective is EU Aid on the Ground? a Comparative Assessment of EU Assistance in Cambodia, Mozambique and Peru

Publication type: Study
Date: 02-10-2007
External author: Alina Rocha Menocal, Geoff Handley, Sue Graves (ODI)
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: development policy | EU financing arrangements | administrative formalities | aid system | Peru | aid recipient | aid evaluation | Mozambique | Cambodia | international aid

Summary: The authors of this report are Alina Rocha Menocal (ODI), Maria Teresa Albareda and Carlos Eduardo Aramburú (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), Geoff Handley (ODI) and Sue Graves (ODI). The authors wish to thank Andrew Lawson and in particular Sven Grimm (German Development Institute, DIE) for their guidance and comments, as well as Roo Griffiths and Duncan Sinclair for their editorial assistance. Special thanks go in particular to the EC Delegations in Cambodia, Mozambique and Peru as well as all the other individuals who took time off from their busy schedules and agreed to be interviewed for this project.

Political Dialogue and Human Rights in the Framework of the Cotonou Agreement

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 10-07-2007
External author: Clara Portela
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights
Keyword: ACP countries | development aid | democracy | Cotonou Agreement | suspension of aid | civil society | rule of law | ACP-EU institution | human rights

Summary: The present study analyses the use of the political instruments for the protection of Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law under the Partnership Agreement between the European Union (EU) and the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) countries embedded in the Cotonou Agreement: the consultations under article 96, intensified and regular political dialogue. It briefly outlines the legal provisions of the revised treaty, reviews recent practice, and looks into the involvement of civil society and parliamentary bodies in the political dialogue.

Dialogues droits de l'homme, dialogue politique: éléments de synthèse

Publication type: Study
Date: 10-07-2007
External author: Sara Guillot, Juriste
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Summary: Cette synthèse fait suite à la réalisation de six études réalisées pour le Parlement européen sur les dialogues suivants : le dialogue sur les droits de l’Homme entre l’UE et l’Iran, le dialogue sur les droits de l’Homme entre l’UE et la Chine, les consultations entre l’UE et la Russie sur les droits de l’Homme, l’application de l’article 96 de l’Accord de Cotonou, les plans d’action des pays du voisinage (pour la Méditerranée) et la place des droits de l’homme dans le dialogue politique en Amérique centrale. Elle s’appuie également sur une série d’entretiens avec des acteurs institutionnels et autres acteurs impliqués dans les dialogues que l’UE entretient avec des États tiers, dont la liste figure en annexe.
Chinese Resources and Energy Policy in Latin America

Publication type: Study
Date: 18-06-2007

External author: Duncan Freeman, Researcher
Jonathan Holslag, Researcher
Brussels Institute of Contemporary Chines Studies, Belgium
Rhys Jenkins, Professor in Economics
School of Development Studies, UEA, United Kingdom

Policy area: Energy | Foreign Affairs | Industry
Keyword: energy supply | natural resources | investment policy | mining industry | economic development | biofuel | bilateral relations | wood production | China | Latin America

Study EN

Access to Essential Medicines: Lessons Learned since the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, and Policy Options for the European Union

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-06-2007

External author: Frederick M. Abbott (Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, U.S.A.) and Jerome H. Reichman (Duke University School of Law, Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A.)

Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Public Health
Keyword: World Trade Organisation | developing countries | India | patents licence | pharmaceutical product | TRIPS | public health | research and development | Brazil | Thailand

Summary: The study evaluates the impact of the TRIPS agreement on access to medicines in developing countries and analyses the evolving legal framework. Special emphasis is given to the issue of compulsory licensing, including recent cases in Brazil and Thailand. The EU’s own implementing regulation is also presented, as well as the considerations for any TRIPS-related provisions in bilateral trade agreements of the EU and the US. The TRIPS agreement and its amendment are discussed in light of the various public health, commercial, legal and economic considerations and interests. The study also sets out conclusions and concrete recommendations to improve the overall framework of the TRIPS agreement and access to medicines.

Study EN

Chinese Resources and Energy Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa

Publication type: Study
Date: 11-06-2007

External author: Jonathan Holslag,
Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Policy area: Environment | Energy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: energy supply | exploitation of resources | corporate social responsibility | mining industry | sub-Saharan Africa | economic development | environmental protection | development aid | coal industry | China

Summary: This report concludes that China has embarked on a well-conceived go-out policy that should enable Chinese companies to gain direct control over African natural resources. The strategy has resulted in a rapidly accelerating flow of African commodities to the People’s Republic, despite the fact that China’s equity projects in Africa remain limited. The Chinese resources and energy policy tends to confirm the conception of Africa as the world’s mining pit. However, only a small number of African countries reap substantial rewards. Moreover, if we go beyond the national trade statistics, it appears that political elites profit most and that new opportunities are unlikely to trickle down or to benefit sectors other than the primary sector. With regard to the EU’s Africa policy, China’s resources and energy policy undermines both the conditional engagement approach and the actorness of the EU as an international player. Finally, the study contains recommendations to the European Union.

Study EN

The Exchange Rates of the Euro vs Other Main Currencies and their Impact on EU Tourism

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 04-06-2007

External author: Kevin MILLINGTON (Acorn Consulting Partnership Ltd.)

Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Tourism
Keyword: United States | United Kingdom | exchange rate | Japan | tourism | Russia | foreign currency | euro | euro area | China

Summary: This note examines exchange rate changes between the Euro and five other key currencies: the US dollar, Japanese yen, Chinese yuan, Russian rouble, and British pound. It is analysed if exchange rates have had a measurable impact on the flow of tourists from each of the five key currency counties to Europe (in particular the Euro area).

In-Depth Analysis EN
The Increase in Kurdish Women Committing Suicide

Publication type: Study  
Date: 04-06-2007

External author: Projet kurde des droits de l'homme, Dublin

Policy area: Social Policy, Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity, Education, Public Health

Keyword: Afghanistan, Iraq, forced marriage, access to education, government violence, Turkey, domestic violence, position of women, Kurdistan question, suicide

Summary: This study provides an in-depth analysis of the root causes of the increase in female suicides in the Kurdish community in Turkey and Iraq. It analyses the factors dominating women’s lives in those Kurdish regions which may be contributory factors to the suicide rate. Such factors include their socio-economic situation, their particular geo-political situation, the impact of long-term conflict, and the social and institutional obstacles to gender equality and Kurdish women’s rights. It also compares the situation of Kurdish women to that of Afghani women.

Study EN, FR

The implementation of the EU guidelines on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Long version)

Publication type: Study  
Date: 02-04-2007

External author: Anna-Lena Svensson-McCarthy, Lawyer, Human Rights Consultant

Policy area: Foreign Affairs, Human Rights

Keyword: torture, the EU's international role, Morocco, Ukraine, cruel and degrading treatment, common foreign and security policy, Egypt, Bangladesh, human rights, Uganda, social rehabilitation, Georgia, Algeria, civil society

Summary: The present study contains the result of the work carried out to analyse the level of implementation of the Guidelines to EU policy towards third countries on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (hereinafter referred to as 'the guidelines'), which were adopted by the General Affairs Council on 9 April 2001 "to provide the EU with an operational tool [...] to support and strengthen ongoing efforts to prevent and eradicate torture and ill-treatment in all parts of the world". As stated in the Introduction to the guidelines, "[r]espect for human rights features among the key objectives of the EU’s common foreign and security policy (CFSP)".

Study EN

The Common Foreign Security Policy and the Security of the Energy Supplies

Publication type: Study  
Date: 14-03-2007

External author: Zeyno Baran, Director, Center for Eurasian Policy, Hudson Institute

Policy area: Energy, Foreign Affairs

Keyword: security of supply, European neighbourhood policy, energy supply, Central Asia, United States, energy diversification, natural gas, gas pipeline, renewable energy, Russia, Middle East, common security and defence policy

Summary: This study recommends that the EU regard energy security as a foreign and security policy issue rather than an economic one. The current lack of cohesiveness and overall weakness of the EU's energy policy is counterproductive to European security, allowing Russia to strengthen its position as the dominant energy supplier. It also leaves Europe's neighbours in the Caucasus and Central Asia more vulnerable to political and economic interference from Moscow, hampering Western efforts at reform in those countries. A common solution to these problems is engagement with these states on the development of non-Russian-controlled oil and gas pipeline routes into Europe. The study argues that this will improve the EU's energy security as well as assist its efforts to foster democracy, rule of law and good governance in its neighbours. The study recommends, in the short- to medium-term, a diversification away from Russian energy supplies to those from the Caspian basin, specifically Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Further supplies of oil and natural gas can be imported from the EU's neighbours on the Mediterranean Sea. In the medium- to long-term, this Study calls for more robust research and development partnerships with other energy consumers, especially with the United States, by far the world's largest energy consumer.

Study EN

Death Penalty in Singapore

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 15-01-2007

External author: M. Ravi (Singapore)

Policy area: Human Rights

Keyword: death penalty, Singapore, drug traffic

Briefing EN
The External Dimension of the eu's area of freedom, Security and Justice in relation to China, India and Afghanistan

Publication type Study
Date 03-10-2006
External author Sebastian Bersick, John Quigley, Signe Bruun-Jensen on behalf of the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS)
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword Afghanistan | EU relations | migration | India | area of freedom, security and justice | terrorism | democracy | rule of law | corruption | China
Summary This Briefing Paper examines EU policies in external relations regarding freedom, security and justice focussing on three diverse countries in Asia - China, India and Afghanistan. The internal stability and security of the EU is inextricably linked to the security and development of countries elsewhere in the world. As such, the EU must develop a proper understanding of the problems and challenges facing these countries and how best to identify and implement strategies to assist them.

Study EN

The Potential Economic Impact and WTO Compatibility of the Economic Partnership Agreements

Publication type Study
Date 02-05-2006
External author Dirk Willem te Velde, Overseas Development Institute, London - European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maastricht
Policy area International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword World Trade Organisation | economic consequence | ACP countries | trade agreement (EU) | economic cooperation | trade relations | least-developed country

Study EN

Implications of reach for the Developing Countries

Publication type Study
Date 05-03-2006
External author Dr Frank Ackerman
Policy area International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Industry
Keyword regulation (EU) | multinational enterprise | ACP countries | developing countries | import (EU) | dangerous substance | chemical product | trade relations | small and medium-sized enterprises | economic analysis
Summary The study deals with the proposed regulatory framework for chemicals (REACH, COM (2003) 644 final of 29 Oct.2003), which causes considerable unease among developing countries on account of the burden that REACH may impose on them in terms of their market access to the EU. The study explains the functioning of REACH and examines the socio-economic impact on the developing countries with special focus on the ACP States, in particular on South Africa, Mozambique, Jamaica, Ghana and Tanzania. It investigates possible changes in the patterns of competitiveness and trade flows. Particular emphasis is placed upon the role of multinationals compared to local producers. Furthermore the study highlights the macroeconomic impact of REACH as far as employment and government revenue are concerned. It also examines the cost and benefit of REACH for the ACP States. Finally, technical assistance, capacity building, access to information and direct support for small and medium enterprises are examined.

Study EN, FR

Implications of REACH for the Developing Countries

Publication type Study
Date 01-03-2006
External author Dr Frank Ackerman, Global Development and Environmental Institute, Tufts University, Boston, USA.
Policy area International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Industry
Keyword multinational enterprise | ACP countries | developing countries | competitiveness | chemical industry | labelling | trade relations | cost-benefit analysis | small and medium-sized enterprises
Summary The study deals with the proposed regulatory framework for chemicals (REACH, COM (2003) 644 final of 29 Oct.2003), which causes considerable unease among developing countries on account of the burden that REACH may impose on them in terms of their market access to the EU. The study explains the functioning of REACH and examines the socio-economic impact on the developing countries with special focus on the ACP States, in particular on South Africa, Mozambique, Jamaica, Ghana and Tanzania. It investigates possible changes in the patterns of competitiveness and trade flows. Particular emphasis is placed upon the role of multinationals compared to local producers. Furthermore the study highlights the macroeconomic impact of REACH as far as employment and government revenue are concerned. It also examines the cost and benefit of REACH for the ACP States. Finally, technical assistance, capacity building, access to information and direct support for small and medium enterprises are examined.
Crisis in Nepal and Response from the International Community

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 15-02-2006
External author: Sushil Pyakurel

Policy area: Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: regional security | establishment of peace | government violence | censorship | political situation | local election | civil war | civilian victim | Nepal | political violence

Summary: Nepal, to compare with countries in Europe, is a little larger in area than Greece but with over 27 million people, it has more than twice the current population of Greece. One of the poorest countries in the world, Nepal is sandwiched between two giant neighbours: India, which surrounds Nepal’s borders on three sides, and China with whom Nepal has its border on the North. The mystical Shangrila as it was known to the international community for its beautiful Himalayas and abundant natural beauty has for the past decade witnessed unprecedented violence in its history as well as political, social and economic turmoil precipitating to a situation today that is alarmingly close to a total collapse of the state. EP-

In-Depth Analysis EN

The Role of Parliaments in Scrutinising and Influencing Trade Policy

Publication type: Study
Date: 04-12-2005
External author: Dr Andreas Maurer
Project Leader

Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | International Trade
Keyword: Iran | parliamentary scrutiny | United States | Japan | World Trade Organisation | Mexico | Australia | legislative-executive relations | Russia | Brazil | trade policy | South Africa | Thailand | Switzerland

Summary: The study covers most important aspects of national parliaments’ involvement in trade issues, including the WTO parliamentary conference and interparliamentary relations. It examines parliaments’ working style, "legislative-executive relations", the channels of parliamentary scrutiny and the general impact of parliaments' activities on government policy and WTO outcomes. The study includes 11 country studies on the trade scrutiny activities and competences of parliamentary bodies in the United States, Mexico, Australia, Russia, South Africa, Iran, Thailand, Switzerland, India, Brazil and Japan.

Study EN, FR

Relations UE- Australie dans les domaines agricole et commercial

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-11-2005
Author: Odile TROUVE-TEYCHENNE

Policy area: International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development

Summary: Cette note donne un bref aperçu des relations UE-Australie sur les plans agricole et commercial. Elle rappelle par ailleurs les positions de l'Australie dans les négociations commerciales multilatérales et les principaux litiges commerciaux qui l'opposent actuellement aux communautés européennes.

Briefing FR

The Human Rights Situation in Laos with Particular Emphasis on the Situation of the Hmong People

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 04-09-2005
External author: Ruhi Hamid

Policy area: Human Rights
Keyword: removal | United States | ethnic group | Laos | ethnic conflict | secret service | human rights

Summary: The Hmong people of Southeast Asia are believed to have originated in China, and some scholars argue that their customs preserve many elements of an ancient civilisation from an area that is now China. The expansion of the Han Chinese people forced the resisting Hmong and other indigenous minorities to flee southwards into the northern areas of present-day Laos, Vietnam and Thailand, early in the nineteenth century. Due to a constant cycle of rebellions and brutal reprisals, this process continued for several decades.

In-Depth Analysis EN
La situation politique au cachemire

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 02-03-2005
External author: Jean-Luc RACINE
Policy area: Foreign Affairs


Ways and means to enhance ACP parliaments' role in the formulation of the Country Strategy Papers (CSP) and parliaments' oversight of the utilisation of the European Development Funds (EDF), especially in the context of budget support

Publication type: Study
Date: 23-03-2005
External author: Dr. Robert Dover
Policy area: Budget | EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: development policy | ACP countries | powers of parliament | use of aid | national parliament | EDF | development aid | European Parliament

Summary: The aim of this study is provide a concise and readable set of analysis and recommendations towards enhancing the role of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of Parliaments in the formulation of the Country Strategy Papers (CSP) and the European Parliament’s (EP) oversight of the utilisation of the European Development Funds (EDF), with particular reference to budget support. The policy recommendations provided within this study are made within the existing constitutional orders in force, and aim to improve oversight and governance of the EDF and direct budget support monies through inter-institutional and political cultural measures.

Regulation in Australia, Canada, Japan and United States of America on Fishmeal Use for Feedstuff

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 22-03-2005
Author: Jesus IBORRA MARTIN
Policy area: Agriculture and Rural Development | Fisheries
Keyword: United States | Australia | Japan | animal health | animal feedingstuffs | Canada | fish

Summary: The aim of this note is to establish the legislative position regarding the feeding of fishmeal to ruminants in four countries outside the European Union: Australia, Canada, Japan and the United States.

Summary of The Public Hearing “The Reform of The CMO on Sugar - 13.07.05”

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 28-07-2005
Author: Odile TROUVE-TEYCHENNE
Policy area: International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: EU aid | common market | ACP countries | financial aid | agricultural production | agricultural trade | protocol on sugar | international trade | common agricultural policy

Summary: At a hearing on 13 July 2005, the European Parliament Committees on International Trade, Development, and Agriculture and Rural Development brought together the key stakeholders (non-member states, OECD, producers, consumers, industry and workers) involved in the reform of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) for Sugar. The speakers expressed their points of view on the reworded reform proposed by the Commission on 22 June 2005. At the end of an intense debate with the MEPs of the committees dealing with the international and Community dimensions of the proposal, the multiple implications of this reform were discussed from a commercial, agricultural and development aid standpoint.

Regulation in Australia, Canada, Japan and United States of America on Fishmeal Use for Feedstuff

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Keyword: United States | Australia | Japan | animal health | animal feedingstuffs | Canada | fish

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La situation politique au cachemire

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 02-03-2005
External author: Jean-Luc RACINE
Policy area: Foreign Affairs


In-Depth Analysis FR
The Development Impact of European Investment Bank (EIB) Lending Operations in the Cotonou and Alma Framework

Publication type: Study
Date: 02-03-2005
External author: Jaroslava Colajacomo
Campagna per la Riforma della Banca Mondiale
Rome, Italy
Contact:
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: poverty | EIB loan | ACP countries | Asia | development aid | sustainable development | European Investment Bank | Latin America
Study: EN

The Impact of 11 September 2001 on the Developing Countries and the Implications for EU Development Policy

Publication type: Study
Date: 01-01-2003
Author: Reinhart PABST
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Security and Defence
Keyword: development policy | Africa | ACP countries | military intervention | development aid | terrorism | cultural cooperation | common foreign and security policy | religious fundamentalism | Islamic State
Summary: This study examines the impact on the economies of the developing countries of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States, and analyses the probable motivation behind these attacks. It proposes a series of measures concerning European Union development policy, notably with regard to democracy, respect for human rights, conflict prevention and poverty reduction. The study stresses the importance of cultural dialogue with the Islamic world.
Study: DE, EN, FR

The World Trade Organisation Negotiations in the Field of Agriculture and Food - The Strategic Positions of the United States and China

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-05-2001
External author: Alan Matthews and K. Ingersent (Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland)
Policy area: Food Safety | International Trade | Agriculture and Rural Development
Keyword: World Trade Organisation | United States | food policy | international negotiations | agricultural trade | trade relations | agriculture-trade relationship | agricultural policy | China
Study: EN, FR
Executive summary: XL

The Impact of World Commodity Prices on Developing Countries

Publication type: Study
Date: 01-03-2001
External author: Sheila Page, Adrian Hewit, Benu Schneider and Henri Bernard Solignac-Lecomte, ODI, London
Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: commodity agreement | commodity price
Summary: Primary commodity prices and markets behave differently from those of manufactures or most services. Prices have fallen over time, so countries and producers dependent on them find that their income does not keep pace with the costs of imports or the costs of production. The fluctuations in their prices in response to 'normal' changes in demand or supply are larger than those in other prices, increasing the costs to producers of holding stocks or working capital, while some prices are also subject to unpredictable and uncontrollable shocks from weather or new discoveries. Thus producers face the dual problem of lower returns and higher risks. These problems face all countries, developed and developing, but they are more serious for developing countries.
Study: EN
Third World Debt and the Various Strategies of Debt Relief

Publication type: Study
Date: 16-10-2000
Author: Reinhart PABST
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: poverty | development policy | World Bank | Africa | ACP countries | developing countries | International Monetary Fund | economic relations | debt reduction
Summary: This study was drawn up on the initiative of Mr Joaquim Miranda, Chairman of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, in view of the ongoing importance of the debt burden for so many developing countries. The present document examines both the present situation of those countries with a debt burden, and the means whereby this burden can be alleviated.

La coopération entre l'UE et les pays ACP dans le secteur de la pêche au-delà de l'an 2000 (Volume 1 et 2)

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-10-1999
External author: Cofrepeche, Brest, France
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Fisheries
Summary: L'étude a deux objectifs fondamentaux: 1) le constat des déficiences en matière de coopération entre l'UE et les États ACP, dans le domaine de la pêche, mais également dans le cadre des politiques nationales des États ACP; 2) l'établissement des propositions opérationnelles pour améliorer le cadre des relations UE-ACP.
Trois grandes parties composent l'étude: Première partie: l'analyse de pêche comme facteur de développement dans les pays ACP; Seconde partie: le cadre de coopération ACP-UE dans le secteur de la pêche; Troisième partie: la coopération dans le secteur de la pêche dans le cadre de l'après Lomé IV.
Le deuxième tome résume la situation du secteur de la pêche dans chacun des pays maritimes ACP.

The ASEM - Perspectives and Priorities

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis
Date: 01-04-1998
Author: Adrian Johan TALSMA | Frank SCHUERMANS
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: EU relations | political cooperation | Asia | scientific cooperation | multilateral relations | economic cooperation | cultural cooperation
Summary: The paper describes the background and objectives of the Asia-Europe dialogue which started at the Bangkok Conference in 1996. A second ASEM summit was held in London in 1998. The conclusions of this last meeting are outlined.

Hearing on WTO and Developing Countries

Publication type: Study
Date: 01-10-1997
Author: Niels KRISTOFFERSEN
Policy area: International Trade | Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: development policy | World Trade Organisation | ACP countries | developing countries | international trade
Summary: Public Hearing held by the Committee on Development and Cooperation, Brussels 21 May 1997

European Union - Far East Asia (Excluding China): Energy Cooperation

Publication type: Study
Date: 01-06-1997
External author: LC Luxcontrol Asbl, Esch/Alzette (L)
Policy area: Environment | Research Policy | Energy
Keyword: energy market | energy industry | energy research | cooperation policy | Far East
Summary: This study seeks to describe prospects for and possible areas of cooperation in the energy sector between the EU and the countries in the Far East (ASEAN States, Japan and Korea).

Source: © European Union, 2021 - EP
Public Hearing on Climate Change and Small Island States

Publication type: Study  
Date: 01-02-1997  
Author: Niels KRISTOFFERSEN  
Policy area: Environment | Development and Humanitarian Aid | EU Law: Legal System and Acts  
Keyword: climate change | coastal region | ACP countries | regional cooperation | coastal protection | greenhouse effect | island  
Summary: Public Hearing held by the ACP-Eu Joint Assembly, Luxembourg, 25 September 1996  
Study: EN, FR

Proposal for a Directive Relating to Cocoa and Chocolate Products. Consequences for Exporting and Importing Countries

Publication type: Study  
Date: 01-01-1997  
Author: Guy DE MUELENAERE  
Policy area: International Trade | Transposition and Implementation of Law | Development and Humanitarian Aid  
Keyword: economic consequence | ACP countries | developing countries | confectionery product | Lomé Convention | food industry | vegetable fats | cocoa  
Summary: The paper describes the possible effects of a modification of the existing directive on the economy of the cocoa exporting countries, on the industry in the importing countries as well as the consumers.  
Study: EN, FR

European Union - China: Energy Cooperation

Publication type: Study  
Date: 01-11-1996  
External author: Consortium GJW Government Relations Ltd, UK, ICEU Leipzig, GmbH, D, Oppenheimer Wolff and Donnelly, B  
Policy area: Environment | Energy | Industry  
Keyword: climate change | energy supply | international cooperation | energy efficiency | greenhouse gas | energy policy | energy production | coal | China  
Summary: Energy is a key sector in the economic life in China, which is a large and inefficient consumer of energy. The development of the energy sector in all provinces in China will have a crucial influence on future developments in East-West-Cooperation, on the world energy markets, on international security of energy supply and, above all, on the global problems of energy-related pollution (CO₂). The aim of the external studies is to prepare background material for an EP-initiative concerning an action plan in this policy area.  
Study: EN

Human Rights = Women's Rights ?

Publication type: Study  
Date: 01-06-1996  
Policy area: Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity | Human Rights  
Keyword: sexual discrimination | sexual violence | Rwanda | position of women | women's rights | Algeria | China | human rights  
Summary: Summary of the public hearing organised by the Committee on Women’s Rights, 26-27 June 1995 on violations of human rights inflicted on women because of their sex. Describes the violence against women in daily life in order to rouse the consciences of our societies and to find the tools and strategies to enable these revolting practices to be stopped.  
Study: ES, DE, EN, FR, NL

The Fourth Lomé Convention After the 1995 Mid-Term Review

Publication type: In-Depth Analysis  
Date: 01-01-1996  
Author: Niels KRISTOFFERSEN | Katrin HUBER  
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: preferential agreement | ACP countries | Sysmin | cooperation on agriculture | development aid | trade relations | fourth Lomé Convention | environmental cooperation | Stabex | rural development | ACP-EU institution  
Summary: Overview of the fourth Lomé Convention with the amendments following from the mid-term review.  
In-Depth Analysis: DE, EN, FR
The Dynamics of Economic Change in Asia - Implications for Trade and European Union Presence

Publication type Study
Date 15-12-1995
External author Kerstin Bergloef
Policy area International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword international investment | foreign investment | economic growth | Asia | trade relations | economic reform
Summary This study reviews the main economic parameters defining Asian economic success in 10 high-growth economies, scans their economic implications for trade and market penetration and highlights policy goals for the EU.
Study EN

Stimulating Economic Growth - The Recovery Programmes in the European Community, Japan and the United States

Publication type Study
Date 01-10-1993
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword United States | economic recovery | economic growth | Japan | European Community | economic cooperation
Study EN

Trading by the new German Länder with the former COMECON Countries in Europe - Development, problems and prospects

Publication type Study
Date 01-03-1992
External author Halle Economic Research Institute, D
Policy area International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword common commercial policy | regions of Germany | European integration | trade relations | Comecon countries | economic analysis | regional development
Summary The study aims to provide an analysis of trading by the new German Länder, following German unification, with the former COMECON countries in Europe. It aims to portray the key problems and discuss the consequences thereof, in particular any impact of the Community’s commercial policy and corresponding effect of investment from other EC countries on that trade.
Study DE, EN, FR

Structural Adjustment in the ACP States and European Community Intervention - Situation and Prospects

Publication type In-Depth Analysis
Date 01-01-1992
External author Institut Larea, Paris, France
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword economic aid | structural adjustment | ACP countries | the EU's international role | economic recession | social adjustment
Summary The paper describes the structural adjustment efforts undertaken in ACP countries, the ambiguous results of these efforts and their possible causes. It proposes various forms of Community action taking into account the social and regional dimension of structural adjustment.
In-Depth Analysis ES, DE, EN, FR